

# Sketch

COMIC BOOK ART TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

#38

\$6.95 U.S.

**BEAU  
SMITH**

Respect, Writing  
and Replies

**TOM  
BIERBAUM**

Selling It

**MITCH  
BYRD**

Drawing Out the  
Dialogue

**STEPHANIE  
O'DONNELL**

Illustrating Cookie Bear

**MIKE  
MAYDAK**

Comics in Education

**RON  
FORTIER**

Character Design

**KHOI PHAM**

Mighty Avengers

**DAVE  
FLORA**

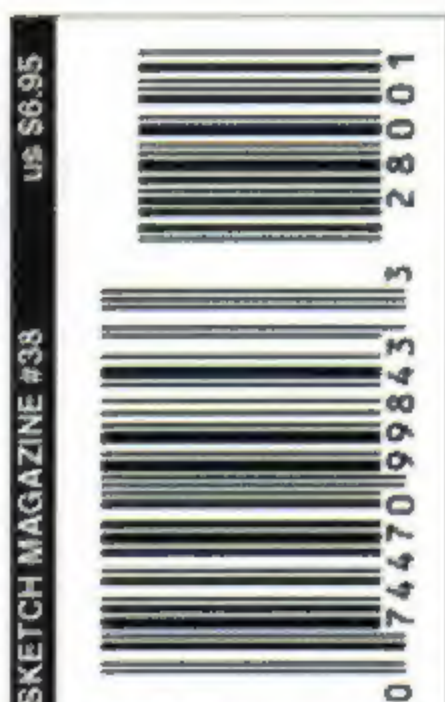
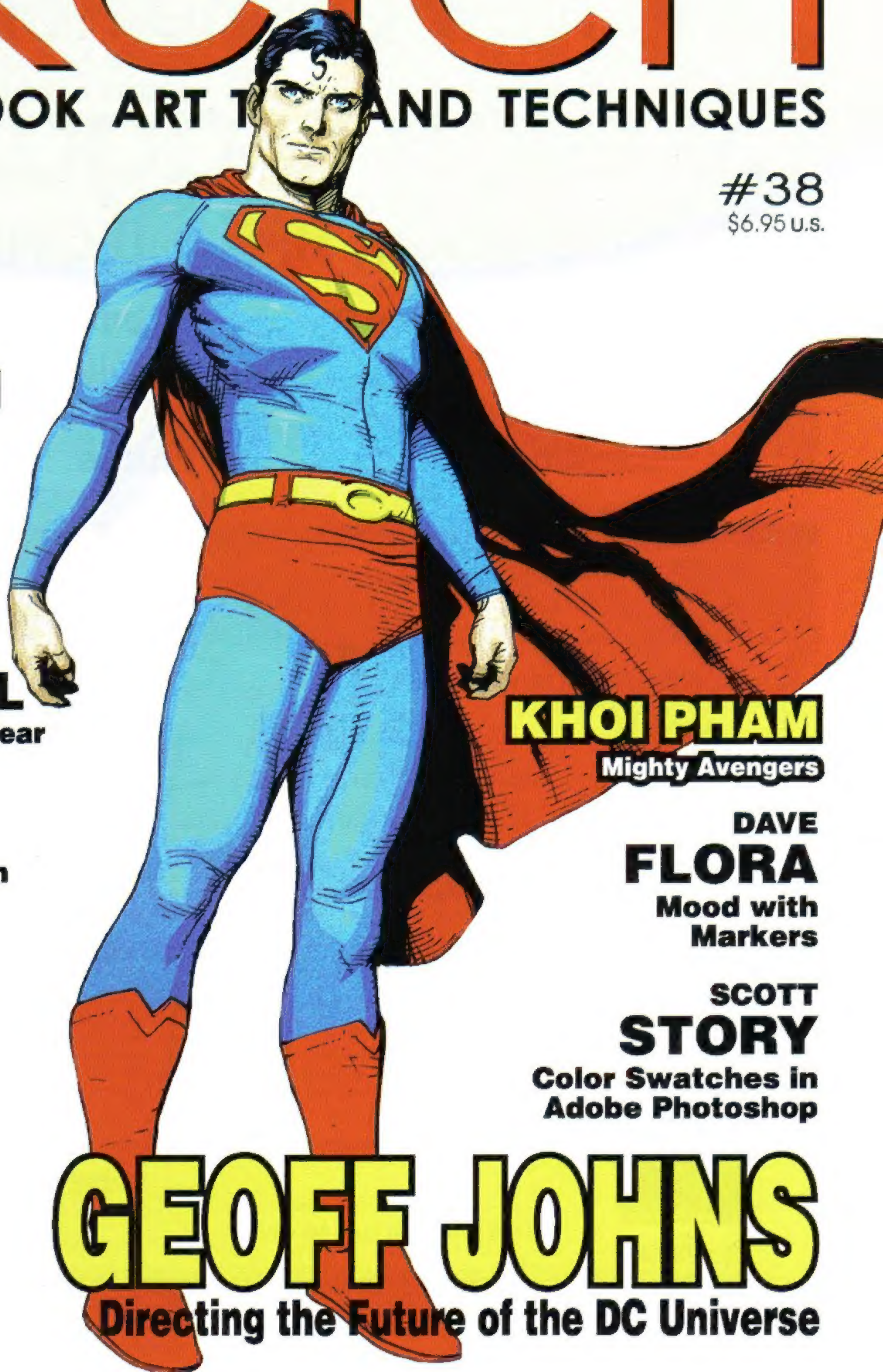
Mood with  
Markers

**SCOTT  
STORY**

Color Swatches in  
Adobe Photoshop

**GEOFF JOHNS**

Directing the Future of the DC Universe



US \$6.95

SKETCH MAGAZINE #38

SKETCHMAGAZINE.NET



# SketchMagazine.net

## The New Online Home of Sketch Magazine COMIC BOOK TIPS & TECHNIQUES

- Discussions
- How-To's
- Interviews
- Links

- Contests
- Tools & Tips
- Free Stuff
- Store

Sketch Magazine - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.sketchmagazine.net/

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Sketch Magazine

Home Feeds (1) Print Tools Messenger Read Mail Page

Sketch Magazine  
the portal to creating comics...

Search

**Index**

- Home
- Discussion
- Subscribe
- Store
- Newsletter
- Advertise

**More**

- Advertising
- Who are we?

**Categories**

Select Category

**Graphic Novel**  
BLOGANDROSES.COM  
**Blue Line Pro**

**How To articles and other coolish things...**

April 8th, 2008 Bill Nichols Posted in General, Sketch Digital | No Comments » Edit |

One of the things (among many) that Bob and I have discussed for this website is the idea of using it as an extension of the print *Sketch Magazine*. Having features that complement one another. For example, if we feature illustrations in black-and-white in the magazine, we could full the full-color version here. Things like that.

I do know that I want to continue the education and entertainment of those who are looking to us to provide some insights in the comics-creating process. So, if we can provide some **How To** articles that we can have here on the website or if we can provide some links to creator websites who have **How To** features added to their own pages, then it's good!

With that said, I'd like for you to do me a favor, would you? If you are a comics creator (and I know that there are some who'll be reading this) and you have a **How To** that you would like to share or if you know of or have links to other creators and their **How To** pages...drop me a line.

Put "Sketch How To's" in the subject box and write me at: billn@sketchmagazine.net

Beau Smith's No Guts, No Glory

**Mission**

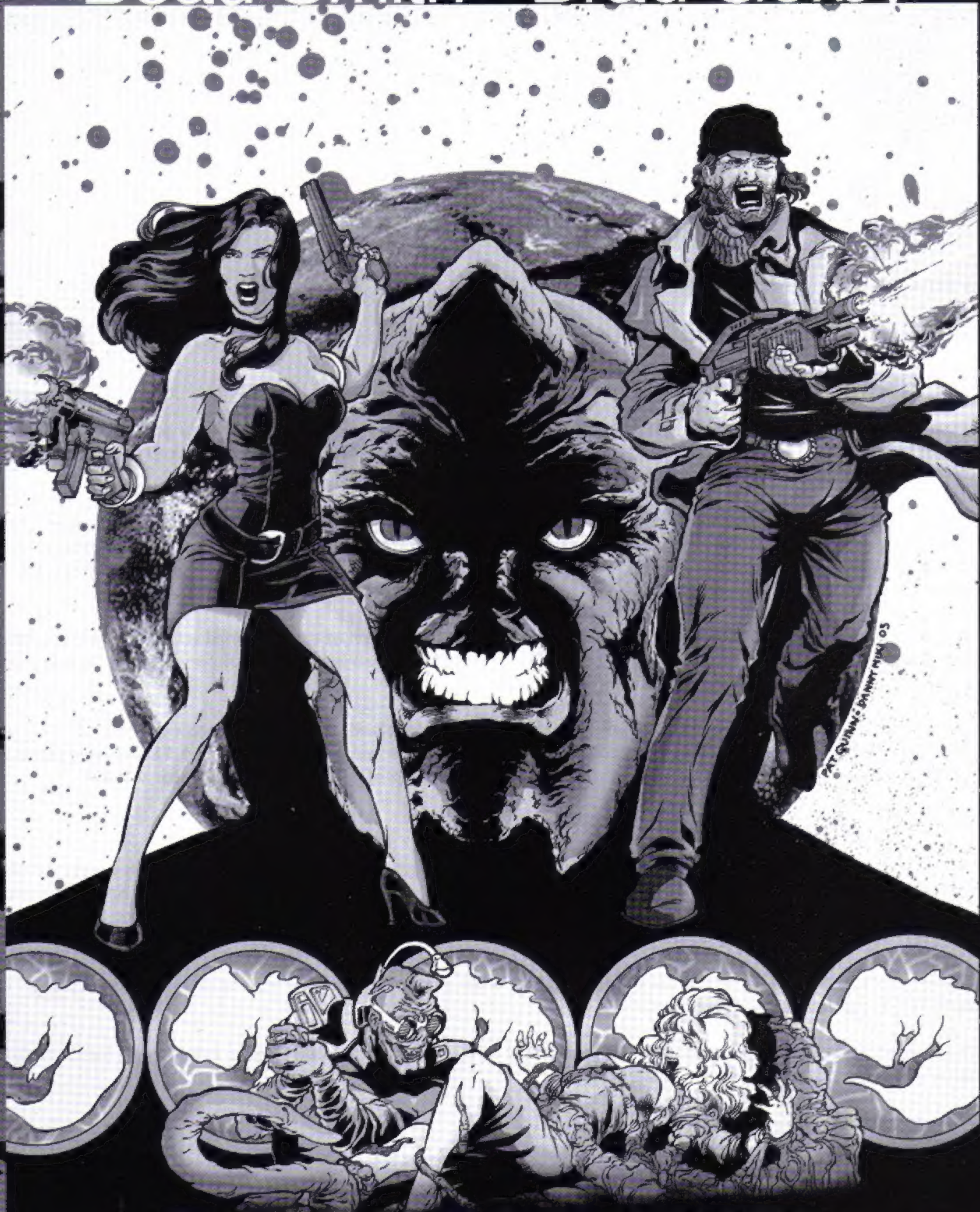
Sketch Magazine's goals are aimed toward enhancing the comics art form, and others, through education and knowledge. We offer creators artistic tips and techniques that help them to enjoy working in this field.  
Robert W Hickey  
publisher/comic creator

**BOOKMARK**

**Blue Line Pro**  
T SUPPLIES



Beau Smith - Brad Gorby



THEY WANT OUR WOMEN.  
THEY WANT OUR WORLD.  
EVERYTHING ELSE...THEY WANT DEAD!

PARTS  
UNKNOWN

available at

comicsXP.com





## A note...

1  
2  
3

It's so close that I can taste it...

We've been working on a new business over the past year that will complete the circle.

What do I mean..?

We created **Blue Line Art** to make quality comic book art boards for all artists. Now *any* artist, not just the ones working for the top publishers, can get professional comic book art boards at any time. Blue Line will be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

Then we found out that artists needed to be able to find quality art supplies. Not everyone had a Michael's or a Hobby Lobby next to him or her. So, we launched **www.BlueLinePro.com** over 12 years ago. We continue to expand and add new tools and supplies daily. It has evolved from a small sub-domain to the state-of-the-art online commerce that we have today.

Calls started coming in about how to do comic art or how to use a certain kind of product. That's when *Sketch Magazine* was created. The first issue shipped February 2000. As you know, *Sketch* continues to be the place for comic book creators to learn and share their craft.

About 2 years ago we created an online community with **Art Unleashed**, which has become a great meeting place for professionals and fans enjoying the comic book industry. At the same time we started **SketchMagazine.net** a place to share and post "How-To" tips and techniques with the help of **Bill Nichols** and **John Wilson**.

But something was still missing...

We kept hearing that creators were making comics but couldn't get them distributed to fans. They were getting frustrated and leaving our industry. I knew what we needed to create something but the technology wasn't available to enough people. Over the past few years high speed internet has become available to a large amount of fans. Finally, the tech was catching up to our vision.

So! In the spring of 2009 we will launch **comicsXP** at [www.comicsXP.com](http://www.comicsXP.com). We will be digitally distributing comics for all publishers and creators.

The circle will be complete. From creating to delivery to fans we will be able to help creators to fulfill their dreams of making comics for fans of their art.

Now I can retire... yea right...

So how do you get your comics distributed?

We are working to make it as simple as possible.

The site should go live by mid-January so check the publisher's page and the FAQ's page. If you have any questions at that point, you can email me at: [RobertH@comicsXP.com](mailto:RobertH@comicsXP.com).

Take care,

Robert W. Hickey  
[RobertH@comicsXP.com](mailto:RobertH@comicsXP.com)





Artwork by Gary Franks  
Superman © & ™ DC Comics

## Geof Johns

Feature by Bill Love ..... pg. 8

## Khoi Phan MIGHTY AVENGERS

Interview by Jason Baroody ..... pg. 36

### A Note

Robert W Hickey ..... pg. 4

### Editorial

Bill Nichols ..... pg. 7

### Respect, Writing and Replies

Beau Smith ..... pg. 16

### Selling It

Tom Bierbaum ..... pg. 18

### Drawing Out The Dialogue

Mitch Byrd ..... pg. 22

### Drawing Cookie Bear

Stephanie O'Donnell ..... pg. 39

### Comics In Education

Mike Maydak ..... pg. 42

### Character Illustration

Ron Fortier ..... pg. 45

### Treat No Publisher

as Your Home Base ..... pg. 49

### Ghost Zero: Mood with Makers!

Dave Flora ..... pg. 54

### Color Swatches

Scott Story ..... pg. 60

Letters ..... pg. 52

Books, Tools, Etc. .... pg. 57

Classifieds ..... pg. 62



"Cookie Bear" - Issue #2, Page 6  
story/panels/inks/coloring by Stephanie O'Donnell  
screens and halftone patterns courtesy of psychobok.sophier.net



# Inside This Month . . .



## Robert W. Hickey

Along with his duties as publisher of Sketch Magazine, he is the creative force behind **Blood & Roses**, **StormQuest**, **Tempered Steele** and **Race Danger**. He currently has a new Blood and Roses project in the works that will be appearing at SKYSTORMONLINE.COM. Bob is one of the co-founders of Blue Line Art and Afterburn Media LLC. Founder of ComicsforCures.com, Co-Founder of comicsXP.com.

## Bill Nichols

As editor of **Sketch Magazine**, Bill welcomes the chance to educate and help other pros to pass along their hard-earned knowledge of All Things Comic Book. Bill has inked for Knight Press (**StormQuest**, **Blood and Roses**, **Dead Kid Adventures**), Caliber Press (**Raven Chronicles**, **LegendLore**, **Magus**) and others. As co-publisher of SkyStorm Studios, Bill is excited to be working on some old favorites and some new stories, as well as bringing life to his own Sparta Bay project.



## Tom Bierbaum

Tom, with wife Mary, has scripted such comics as Legion of Super-Heroes and The Heckler for DC Comics, Xena and Return to Jurassic Park for Topps Comics, Star for Image Comics and Dead Kid Adventures, a creator owned project by Knight Press.

## Mitch Byrd

Mitch's pencils wow everyone. While you enjoy his exclusive Sketch material issue after issue, look for his work on Guy Gardner: Warrior, Shi, Starship Troopers, and many other comics, as well as Blue Line Art's Notes to Draw From, Notes to Draw From 2 and Mitch Byrd's Scribbles and Sketches. Mitch's latest projects include a Blood and Roses graphic novel and a creator owned project titled Kings of the Road.



## Bob Almond

A comics fan since the age of nine, Bob instantly set his career goal on breaking into the funny book biz and is probably most-known for his 3-year critically-acclaimed run with Priest & Sal Velluto on Black Panther. His most recent assignment has been a return to his cosmic Marvel roots with the **Annihilation Conquest: Quasar** series. Bob lives in New Bedford, Massachusetts with his wife Diane, his son Nathan and cats Tux and BJ. You can visit his website The Bob Almond Inkwell at <http://www.almondink.com>

## Scott Story

Scott is a freelance illustrator who has been working in the comic industry for over a decade. He has done work for numerous publishers, including Image, Devil's Due, Digital Webbing, Farschach Entertainment and Amp. "Johnny Saturn", which Scott co-writes with Berita Story and provides all the art for, is his first foray into self-publishing. For more information visit his website at [www.storystudios.com](http://www.storystudios.com), or email him at [storystudios@earthlink.net](mailto:storystudios@earthlink.net). To read Johnny Saturn, go to [www.johnnysaturn.com](http://www.johnnysaturn.com).



## Jason Baroody

Jason is a comic book Writer and Artist. He co-founded Disgruntled Fanboy Comics and was Art Director of the company. He's worked for several comic book publishers and on many different books. He is a co-founder and member of Ten Ton Studios and teaches a comic book class on the weekends. [www.tentonstudios.com](http://www.tentonstudios.com).

## Stephanie O'Donnell

Stephanie is a New York based cartoonist and comic book artist. Growing up in an artistic household, she was exposed early to such talents. Inspired by Warner Bros. cartoons and strips such as "Peanuts" and "Calvin and Hobbes", she began fashioning her own characters that would eventually become "The Original Nutty Funsters".

What started out as a boredom killer between classes became a comic strip series in 2004, being featured alongside fellow artists on collective website The Flaming Cat. In addition to the Nutty Funsters, Stephanie also draws and writes another strip, "Expletive Deleted". Add to that list a recent creation, "Cookie Bear".

She has also contributed artwork for various comic projects such as "Jesus Hates Zombies: Those Slack-Jaw Blues", Free Lunch Comics' "Only In Whispers", Futurius' "Tales From The Plex" anthology series, and is working on many more.

During her spare time, she likes to learn languages, knit half-assed scarves and hats, cheat at Monopoly, annoy her sister, and look for more obscure Italo tracks to grace her iPod mini.



# Sketch

COMIC BOOK ART TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

ISSUE #38

VOL. 9 NUMBER 1

ISSN: 1536-7932

*publisher / creative director*  
Robert W. Hickey

*Editor*  
Bill Nichols

## Editorial Contributors

Tom Bierbaum, Robert W. Hickey, Mitch Byrd, Bill Nichols, Bob Almond, Ron Fortier, Stephanie O'Donnell, Mike Maydak, Dave Flora, Jason Baroody, Scott Story.

## Artistic Contributors

Mitch Byrd, Alex Ross, Khoi Phan, Stephanie O'Donnell, Dave Flora, Scott Story.

## Pre-Press Design Afterburn Media LLC

For advertising information:

**SKETCH MAGAZINE**

P.O. Box 6426

Florence, KY 41022-6426

[info@blueinepro.com](mailto:info@blueinepro.com)

<http://www.sketchmagazine.net>

ph: 859-282-0096 / fax: 859-282-9412

Sketch Comic Book Art Tips & Techniques Magazine is published bi-monthly (six times a year) by Afterburn Media LLC, P.O. Box 6426, Florence KY 41022-6426, USA. Periodicals postage paid in Florence, KY and at additional mailing offices. Newsstand distribution by Warner International Periodical Services, INC. Specialty Shop distribution by Diamond Comics Distributors. Basic subscription rates: one year (six issues) \$35.70 U.S., \$49.00 Canada & Mexico, \$98.00 Foreign. Prepaid in U.S. funds only. POSTMASTER send changes of address to Sketch Magazine P.O. Box 6426, Florence KY 41022-6426. Entire contents copyright 2009 Afterburn Media LLC. All Rights Reserved. Reproduction in whole or part is prohibited. PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

**Afterburn**  
MEDIA LLC

P.O. Box 6426, Florence, KY 41022-6426

(859) 282-0096

[AFTERBURNMEDIA.COM](http://AFTERBURNMEDIA.COM)

CEO - Robert W. Hickey

CFO - Mike W. Hickey

Circulation Manager - Kim Back

Comic books are a **fun medium**! Blue Line Arts' goals are aimed toward enhancing this art form - and others - through knowledge and quality art supplies. We try hard to make certain that you, the reader, have the comic book technique information you require for your personal enjoyment of this great field.

Any statements made, expressed or implied in Sketch Magazine are solely those of columnists or persons being interviewed and do not represent the editorial position of the publisher, who does not accept responsibility for such statements.

All characters and artwork shown in Sketch Magazine are trademark and copyright of their respective owners.

Entire contents copyright 2009 Afterburn Media LLC / Blue Line Art. Publication may not be reproduced in part or whole in any form without written permission of Afterburn Media LLC.







## Bills Words

Look around at your life. What do you see? Do you see things as a positive or a negative?

Now, look back at your life up until now. How have the events of your life shaped you? Who has played a part in the story that is You? Hm? Your parents, a friend, a teacher?

How about the future? Are the things that are unfolding in your day-to-days affecting your weeks-to-come? Is that a good thing?

One of the threads that has consistently run its course through my life has, of course, been comic books. You've guessed that already, haven't you?

This list goes something like: reader, fan, collector, fan artist and writer, retailer, small press publisher, inker, writer, editor, and co-publisher. What does your list look like?

One of the titles I've added would be: comics mentor. I meant it to be a name for my portfolio review/consultant service, but in many ways it has come to define me somewhat. Especially when you take off the first part of it.

Being a mentor these days is one thing I like to be. I'm here with my background, education, influences, and knowledge to help. I hope that you've grasped that about me as well.

You can be a mentor, too. It isn't an exclusive club, you know. You have things that are unique to you. Pass them along to others. Share those things with the folks who may need to hear.

Be an encourager.

And be encouraged.

Best,  
Bill





## Celebrating Comics: Geoff Johns on . . .

by Bill Love

Illustration by Alex Ross  
All characters © & ™ DC Comics

*"Every once in awhile you need to celebrate the fact that comics exist. In an arena where negativity can run rampant over the years of joy comics have given us you need to give thanks."... Geoff Johns*

For over ten years comics fans have been giving thanks for the stories Geoff Johns has been giving us. His name has become synonymous with the DC Universe with his indelible contributions to Justice Society of America, Flash, Green Lantern, Superman and more. There are a lot of changes in store for one of the industry's hardest working writers as he finishes a ten year run on JSA. What won't change is his dedication to telling good stories.





Illustration by Alex Ross  
All characters © & ™ DC Comics

## Johns on Getting His Start in Writing and Comics

I was a film major. As everyone started wanting to direct they needed short films to direct. So I started writing ten minute movies for all my friends. I got more into screenwriting, taking several classes on that. I started my career wanting to direct, but soon came to the realization that I wanted to write instead. Throughout college I wrote and really learned to enjoy it.

I moved to Los Angeles and called Richard Donner's office and asked for a job. They hired me as an intern and I was soon hired as Donner's assistant. I got lucky. I'm told that phone call was the luckiest call I ever made. Absolutely. I learned everything I really know about story from Donner. He and I used to talk about his approach to Superman all of the time. He has this great word - Verisimilitude - which means

truth. As in, treat everything as if it's real. You can have humor and fun, but don't make it camp. Make this the real world and treat the material with respect. There's a reason that Superman: The Movie still holds up. In comics, John Ostrander and Mark Waid are my top two influences. Growing up, they were my favorite writers.

I was working on a movie called Conspiracy Theory that we shot in New York City. I had gotten in touch with some people at DC, who sent us some Big Book of Conspiracies stuff. I invited the editors to the set and we got to talking. I was a comic book junkie, and they said "You should pitch us something. You should pitch us something."

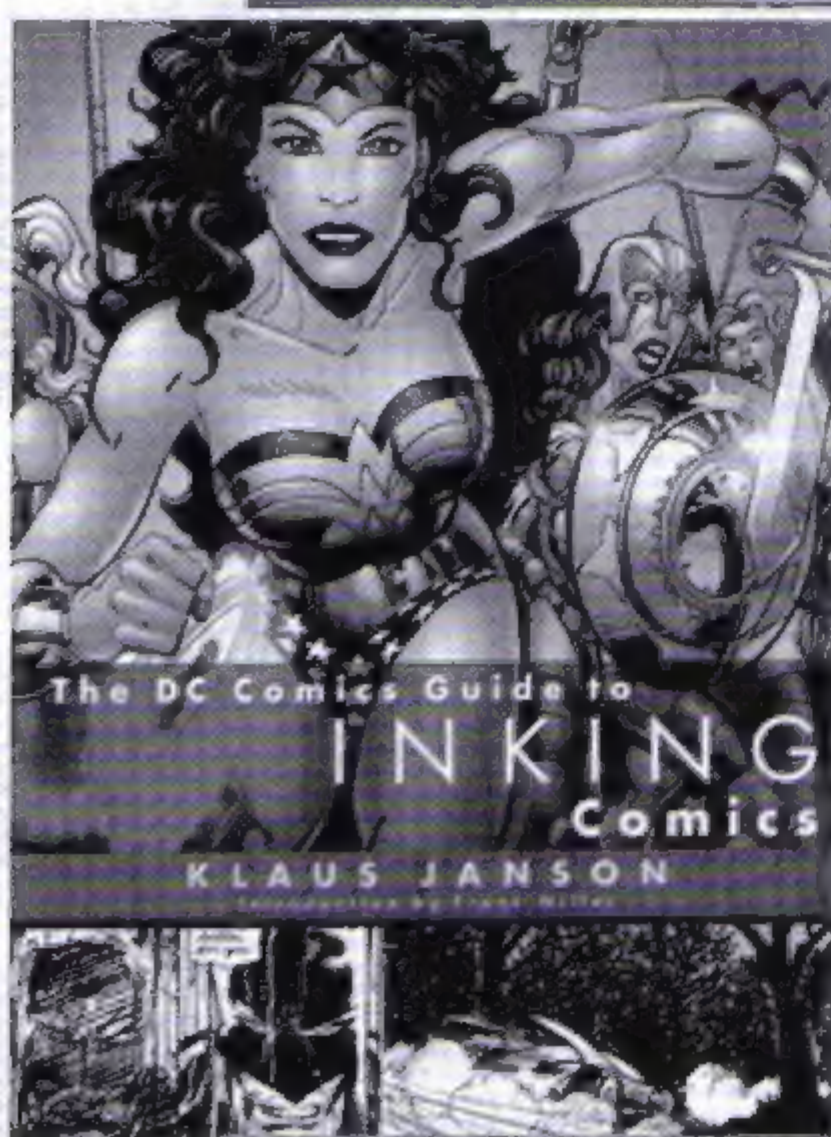
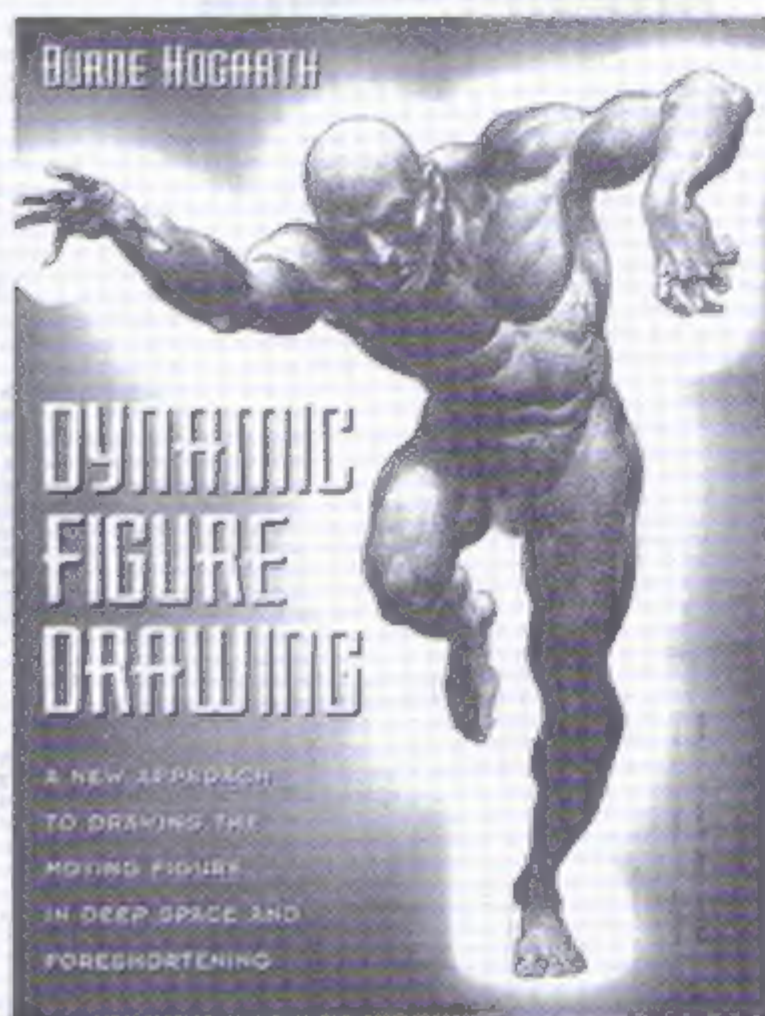
So I did. And one of the editors liked the idea, and that was Stars and S.T.R.I.P.E. and it just sort of

snowballed from there. It was supposed to just be a side thing, but I had a great time doing it. I'd been working for a few years in the film industry in screenplay development so I already had story sense. That gave them a little bit more trust to let me try something.

JSA, you know, I had known James Robinson. He was leaving JSA and I had met with David Goyer and him on the Star Spangled Kid before they started the book so they could figure out what she was all about. When James decided to leave the book, David wanted another co-writer because he liked working with somebody. And James suggested me. David also had known me already in L.A., so we tried working together, and it obviously worked out really well. So that was that.



# ARTBOOKS



**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES  
**BLUELINEPRO.COM**

**Geof Johns**

## Johns On Writing

There's only one challenge. Learn something new every day. Get better at writing every day. I try and look back at my work and see the mistakes I've made or the things I could improve upon. I'm always trying to get better and to re-shape my approach. My personal goal is to top myself every month, and I can only do that by working with my editors and artists — my partners — who constantly push and challenge me. So the biggest challenge is — challenging myself.

You don't want to just sit in a room and type all the time. That's boring. But to be able to talk to [artists] Ethan [Van Scriver] and Ivan [Reis] about the different Green Lanterns, about the new Oaths and m.o.'s of the Corps and the Alpha-Lanterns, and to talk to Gary Frank about what Superman means, what our goals are for Brainiac; that's what's great. We've spent hours discussing Jimmy Olsen and even Gary's redesign on Lois Lane's hair (it's too short!). That's fun stuff. I don't know if I ever had as much fun in comics as I am having right now, simply because of the characters and the people I am working with.

There are a lot of different types of writers. I've seen people equate me to Brian Michael Bendis for a lot of reasons, and I've done it myself too, even though we're different writers. Besides the fact that we both write a lot of books, and besides the fact that we have both been doing it for about the same time now, Brian really commits to characters. Brian

doesn't come on and do three issues of someone and then bolt. And Brian's books are better for it. 'Ultimate Spider-Man' is one of the most amazing books on the stands now. His work on 'Avengers,' he's built this huge tapestry and you can see that he is building to something bigger with 'Secret Invasion' and the Skrull stuff. Also, he does it with characters like Spider-Woman and Luke Cage, who were lost in obscurity until Brian got a hold of them. I really respect what Brian has been able to accomplish up to this point and what he does now. One of my goals in this business is to work with Brian on something, either in tandem or on a book together. That would be an absolute thrill.

And the same thing goes for Grant Morrison, as far as writers go. You can see on 'Batman,' he has a massive plan laying out for Batman, and 'Seven Soldiers' plays into 'Final Crisis.' You can see him lay all the seeds here and, bam, pay them off. Grant's an unparalleled visionary who has eyesight that goes not only into the future but sideways and up and down and into different dimensions. Like Brian, he is somebody that I really respect as a writer, somebody that I think the comic world would be worse off without. I like what those guys do. And maybe it's because it's what I want to achieve in my books; stories that make people feel, that people get excited about and, more than anything else, crafting characters and heroes that we all fall in love with.





## Johns on Continuity

If you're working on an in-continuity book you should be familiar with what's gone on before. It's that simple. That doesn't mean you have to adhere to every specific detail or even some big ones if your story calls for something different, but like directing - you need to know the rules before you break them. In my film classes we'd have these guys who refused to learn the basics of storytelling with the camera and they'd say "art has no rules." Sure. They're partly right. But there are "suggestions" to better communicate with your audience.

I know DC comics, and grew up with DC comics. I grew up on Silver Age comics, because my uncle had a huge collection at my grandmother's house. When I'd go over there, I'd read all these checkerboard DC comics, like Flash and everything else. I used to love the Rogues, and I loved all these tricks The Flash could do. He was just always the coolest character. I've just read a lot of comics, and I've kind of absorbed the history of them in my head. I do research. Like with Flash: Rebirth, I have the whole run of Barry Allen Flash, so I went back and read all these Flash comics and re-familiarized myself with everything that had gone on, and things that I wanted to do with Barry's character and the Flash mythology itself. Legion of Three Worlds took a ton of research. But a lot of it I already knew. I knew Gates' character really well, so writing him and XS and all those Zero Hour Legionnaires I knew

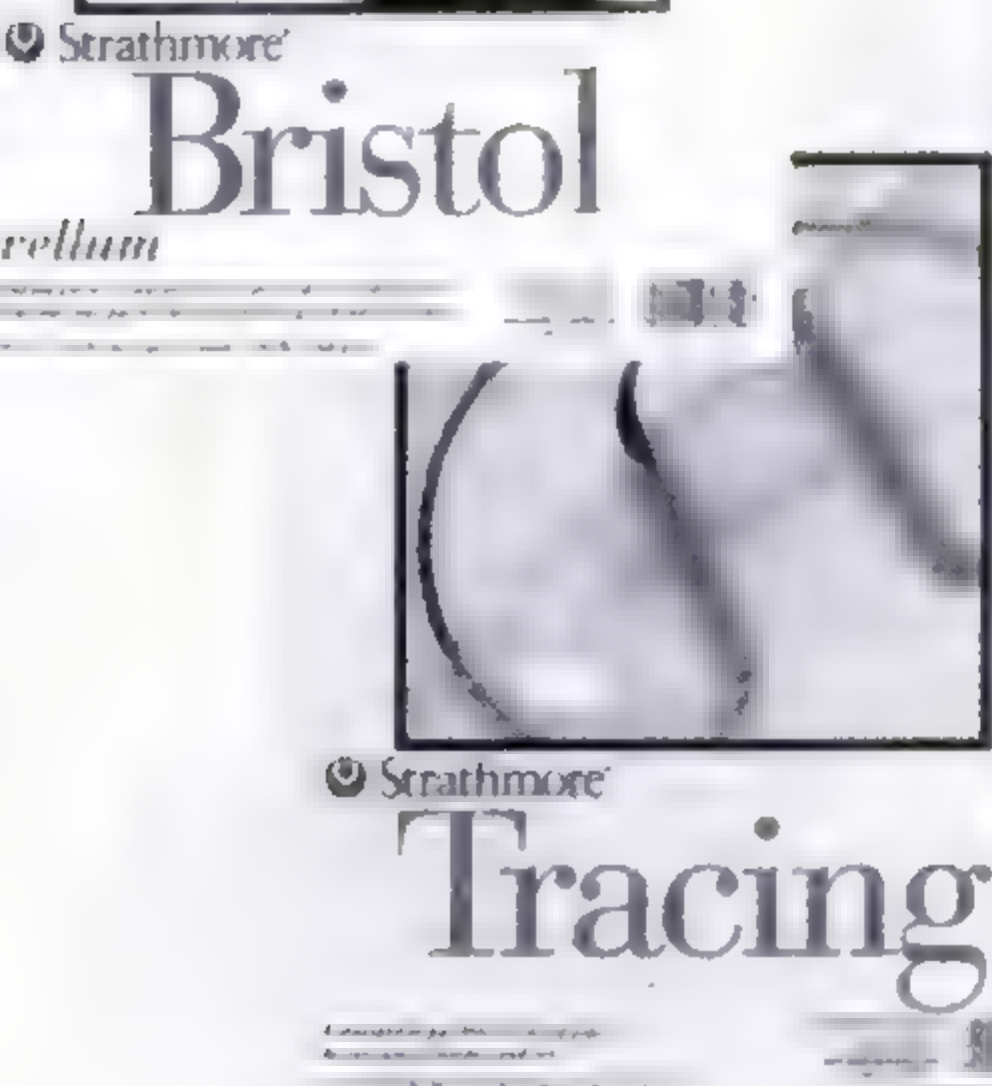
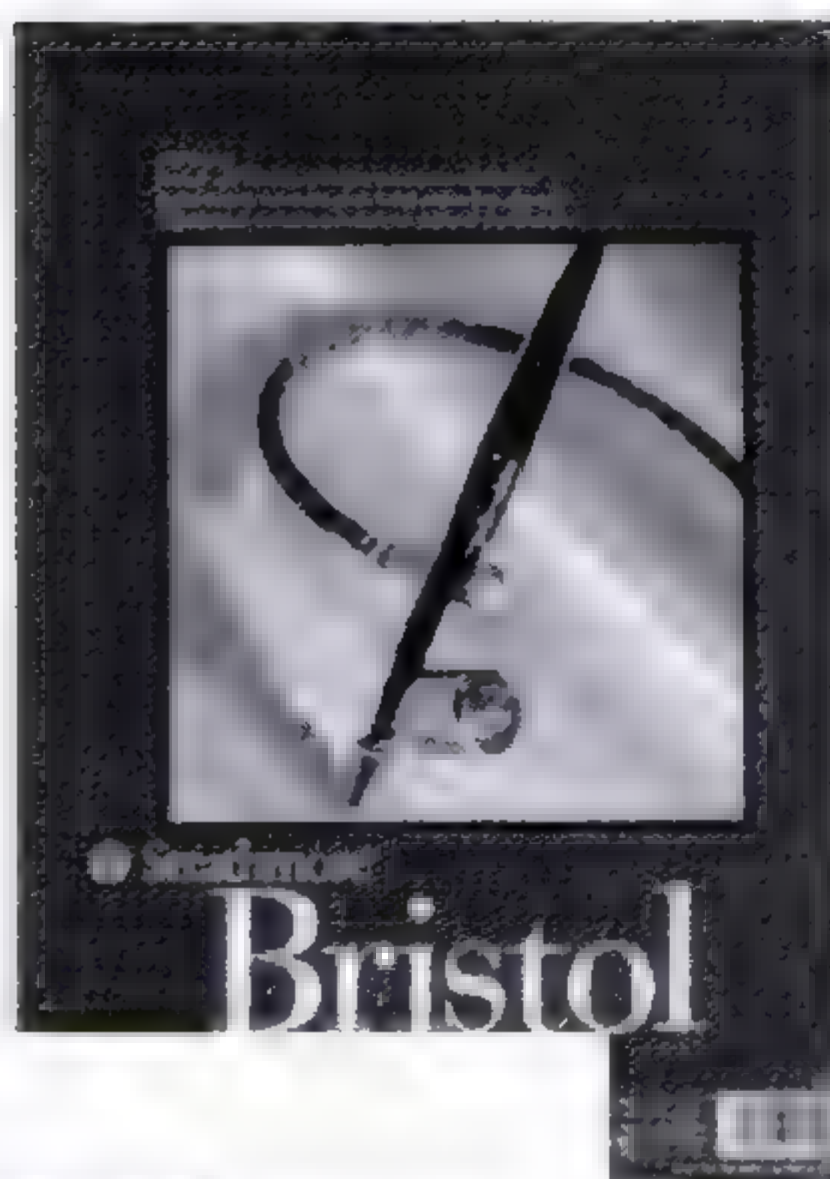
## Johns on Large Casts

I usually like writing team books more than solo books, because I like writing big casts. Numbers of characters don't bother me. Like I'd love to write Legion of Superheroes because they have such a big cast, and Justice Society of America has a huge cast. Even Green Lantern with Hal Jordan has so many different supporting characters, so it's basically an ensemble book focused on him. But the scope never bothers me. And I live and breathe DC, so I never get

confused about it. I think I have a handle on the characters and I know where to go if I don't know. I just like big stories. The bigger the better. And even in the Flash, we had some big stories in there. In Titans of Tomorrow, we had like 20 characters in there. Most of the books I've worked on, there have been storylines where I've had to tackle quite a few characters. That's what the DC Universe is. I guess I like writing DC Universe stories.



# QUALITY ART PAPERS



**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES

BLUELINEPRO.COM

Geof Johns



Illustration by Alex Ross  
All characters © & TM DC Comics

really well, because I had read all those stories. And obviously the original Legion, also, because I've been working on them for so long now. But there was a lot of research to be done and things to look at. I guess it does come naturally as far as the way I approach stories. I like to work with these big mythologies like the Green Lantern mythology or the Superman mythology. And really, the Legion is just another era of the vast Superman mythology. It's like that great video game where you enter that whole new level, and it's gigantic. It's like a whole different game.

Right now I'm looking at the Flash with Rebirth, and I want to see how I can make this mythology even bigger. It's already huge. The Flash has an awesome base, so cracking it open even more has been an incredible challenge. The Flash has always been my favorite character since I was a kid. And it's fun to get back to writing Wally West. I wrote him for five years. To get back to him and then write Barry Allen. Like I said earlier, I get

to take what I've learned over the last several years writing comics and apply it to the Flash. Because I started writing the Flash almost when I started writing comics, and now I get to look at everything I've done to this point and see how I can apply that onto my original work on the character. I want to continue to elevate my writing, and hopefully I'll achieve that.

Every time Ethan and I work together, we're really proud of what we do. Every single time. And I think we always strive to make it better, better and better, from Iron Heights to Rebirth to Green Lantern to the Sinestro Corps. You know, Jeph Loeb has Tim Sale, and with me and Ethan, it's like the same thing. We just fit together really, really well. I love working with him, and I love his art. And he does understand what I'm going for, he does look at the mythology of superheroes the same way I do - kind of a classic but modern take on it, like it's iconic but not from 1965. And that's really what I strive for in superhero comics, and that's what Ethan strives for.





### Johns On Writing The Legion of Super-Heroes for Smallville

I thought they would be great characters. 'Smallville' had been featuring Green Arrow for some time, and Black Canary and Cyborg and Bart Allen had made appearances, and since the Legion is such a big part of the Superman mythology from when he was younger, I had an idea to introduce them into the 'Smallville' world too. I was casually talking to former 'Smallville' producer Jeph Loeb one day, who obviously knows the show runners – Darren, Todd, Kelly and Brian – and he mentioned it to them that I had an idea for an episode.

They called me up and were pretty excited to hear it. So I pitched them the idea of the Legion

and how it affected Clark and what it would mean to the characters in the series. And they loved it. I spent a couple weeks in the writers' room with them breaking the story and working on the script and then flew up for the shoot. It was really pretty amazing. I've been in Writers Rooms before, but this one was far above the most friendly and exciting to be in. Their entire staff has a lot of talent. I was working on set with the producers and the director, Glen Winter, and the actors, overseeing the script, checking in and brainstorming with executive producer Darren Swimmer, altering the script when we needed to alter it. One of my favorite things

to do as a writer in the film and television world is like my ideal working relationship in the comic world, which is not sitting in the room alone but working with somebody. And whether it be Gary Frank on 'Action Comics' or Ivan Reis on 'Green Lantern' or Ethan Van Sciver on 'The Flash,' the idea is that I am the writer but the artists are essentially the directors. Working with a director on set like that, and seeing him bring the Legion to life, being there to help support that vision and work on the story and the script and the dialogue and everything, is a culmination of everything I like doing.





## Johns on The DCU Online Game

I am really excited that I got to work with Jim on creating a virtual replica of the DC Universe that you can go inside. Literally, if you name a character, he or she is probably in the game. You know how I work. I go to the well when it comes to the DC Universe. I stick with the big guys too like Superman and Green Lantern but I also go pretty deep with characters from 'Teen Titans' and 'Justice Society of America.' There's Black Adam stuff. There are all kinds of nooks and crannies of the DC Universe but there is also some big, huge epic places like Metropolis and Gotham City. It was a lot of fun to be able to work with Jim and say "where can we go and what should we do?" And that's anywhere you think the story needs it to go.

You don't play as anybody. You enter the universe as your own character. You are going to be working alongside everybody. You will be working with Hal Jordan.

Or he will be coming after you. It's not one point of view. It's a lot of points of view depending on what you want to be. It's not just hero or villain. It is facets of heroes and facets of villains. It's what path you want to take. It's a story written from a couple of different perspectives. And the story can unfold differently or you can experience things differently depending on what path you choose. In a secret origin, something happens to you and you make a choice, what are you going to do?

There are lots of different stories or offshoots you can do. The story that I've created, is really just the first story but within that story, there are dozens and dozens of others. Eventually, they will do more and whether I would do those or readapt something that has already been in the comics, which they have talked about, that's for later down the line.

It's just good talking to him [Lee] about the DC Universe in general - and seeing Jim tackle every character in the DC Universe, because often his projects are Superman or Batman so it's nice to see him do everybody. I think Jim approached me because I am a gamer. But Jim and I have been talking about doing something together for a long time in comics. And this is kind of a weird comic. But he came to me because he knew I was a fan of the game. And the world - the DC Universe, I know it pretty well.

It was fun, but my first love and interest is always going to be comic books. Comic books are my main focus and specifically, the DC Universe. It's where I have the most fun. It's where I find a lot of challenges in my writing. It's never boring. It's always exciting, no matter what character I am working on.





### Johns On Future Plans and Dreams

I have a couple of years of Iron Man stories already; I have notebooks full. Tony Stark is a fascinating character and with everything he's gone through, I just had a story rush into my head one day and over a weekend I wrote it all up. I have a Hulk story that I want to tell and a Fantastic Four story. There are a lot of characters over at Marvel that I'd love the opportunity to work on. And I'd kill to work with [editor] Steve Wacker on Spider-Man. I'd love to go on 'Avengers' again with everything I know now. I'd love to write an 'Avengers' book side-by-side with Brian. I think that would be a blast.

I love DC and where I am and working with everyone there, but a lot of my friends are at Marvel. It'd

be fun to work with Ed Brubaker or Matt Fraction on something. I'd love to do 'Iron Man' alongside Brubaker as he is doing 'Captain America.' That would be a lot of fun because those are my X-Box Live compadres, and they are writers that I really respect.

There are still tons of DC characters to write... Aquaman is a big one. I have very specific ideas for him. Very specific. I love Aquaman. I really, really love Aquaman. I'd love to work on Aquaman. I'll just leave it at that. Justice League of America, Batman, and more Flash. And Firestorm." I would love to do Aquaman, Superman, Wonder Woman, Green Lantern, all those guys together. A real classic JLA lineup book would be sweet.

### Johns On Leaving JSA

The JSA to me represents everything good about life, work and superheroes. In life, generations past, present and future all provide different viewpoints. There can be something magical when it's past from grandfather to father to son or from mother to daughter or son to grandfather. There's nothing more important than family – and family means a lot more than just blood relatives. That's what my very first book, STARS & S.T.R.I.P.E., was about and that's what JSA, and life, is about.

So why am I leaving? I have more stories to tell, and the characters are endless, but that's also true for the DC Universe. I'm ready to move on to some other challenges like returning to THE FLASH and SUPERMAN: SECRET ORIGIN. And I am also obsessed with making sure that GREEN LANTERN, BLACKEST NIGHT and everything around it is the absolute best it can possibly be.

...and that's only part of 2009. There are some new projects on the horizon.

Whether in film, videogames, other publishers or his beloved DC Universe, we hope to continue to give thanks for the talent and dedication Johns shares with his fans for a long time to come.

*A special thank you to the folks at Newsarama, Comic Book Resources, IGN, SlushFactory, Fanboy Planet, and ComicBloc for material quoted in this article.*

Sketch





## From The Ranch

# RESPECT, WRITING and REPLIES

by Beau Smith

There once was a time when you went to work, you went to work. You put your nose to the invisible grindstone and got the job done. There wasn't any of this texting, instant messaging and emailing your old high school and college buddies photos of porn stars you'll never meet. When you were on the job, you were on the job.

Think about it. Your instant messages, texting and emails could end up in your boss's in-box or that of the office stoolie. You don't want that. You can't take the chance.

I'm not saying you shouldn't text, instant message and email work stuff. These are modern times that are moving at warp speed. Technology is jumping hurdles like an Olympic champion. Every week something new is being

updated, changed or evolving. You need to know of those changes, BUT you also need to use the proper business etiquette that has always been the benchmark of civility and dignity. You must not let respect be tossed aside like yesterday's news. You can't let your communication become "casual Friday."

Business is important. The comic book business is important. Just because you love your job doesn't mean you should slack on respect. Not everyone will always "get" what you mean. It doesn't matter if it's a first impression or a millionth impression. The fact remains you must make an impression. Just be sure it's always the right one.

Yes, there are those cute little emotion icons that people use, little smiley faces and such, but

they really don't belong in business dealings. Save it for the social networks. If you use professional manners when doing business on your computer, cell phone or internet device then you won't need those goofy icons to get your point across. You need to communicate not confuse. I understand that when using your cell, Blackberry or iPhone that your fingers aren't enjoying use of a full keyboard. Even more reason to be as clear as possible. Don't be lazy and skip punctuation. It's important and it reflects back on you. It also steers the person you're communicating with to cross their T's and dot their I's. That's a good thing.

When emailing co-workers or folks you're doing business with, get to the point, but not so terse that it appears rude. I advise not typing in all lower case. I understand that it saves time, especially





when using a Blackberry or iPhone, but it's worth the effort to avoid because it shows disrespect towards the person you're communicating with. It's like you're saying that they aren't important enough to take the time to capitalize properly. Even if you've known the person all your life, do it right. Don't take them or your relationship for granted.

Avoid abbreviations, even while texting or with instant messages. Remember that it's business. Save the abbreviations for after hours. Always check your spelling, grammar and punctuation. It's important.

Never use your business email to send dirty talk to your loved one or porn photos to your friends. Try and keep all personal emails to a minimum.

Always respond to emails, especially to thank someone for sending you a file or an important reply. This not only makes you

look good, but it also frees that person up to move forward with their work knowing you got their message and things are full steam ahead. Make a "signature" for yourself that will always be at the bottom of your email. It will give all your important contact information as well as be a perfect place to display your company's or your website. It should look like this:

Beau Smith  
P.O. Box 706  
Ceredo, WV. 25507  
304-555-5555

beau@flyingfistranch.com  
www.flyingfistranch.com

Never write in all capitals. It's just like having an ex-wife yelling at you. Never bad-mouth co-workers or your boss. That'll get you a one-way ticket to the unemployment line. Try and think back to the old school way of writing a real letter. If you keep that in

mind while emailing you'll be more apt to stay on the professional track. Your goal is to be understood. If things get confusing it can really cost you and your business.

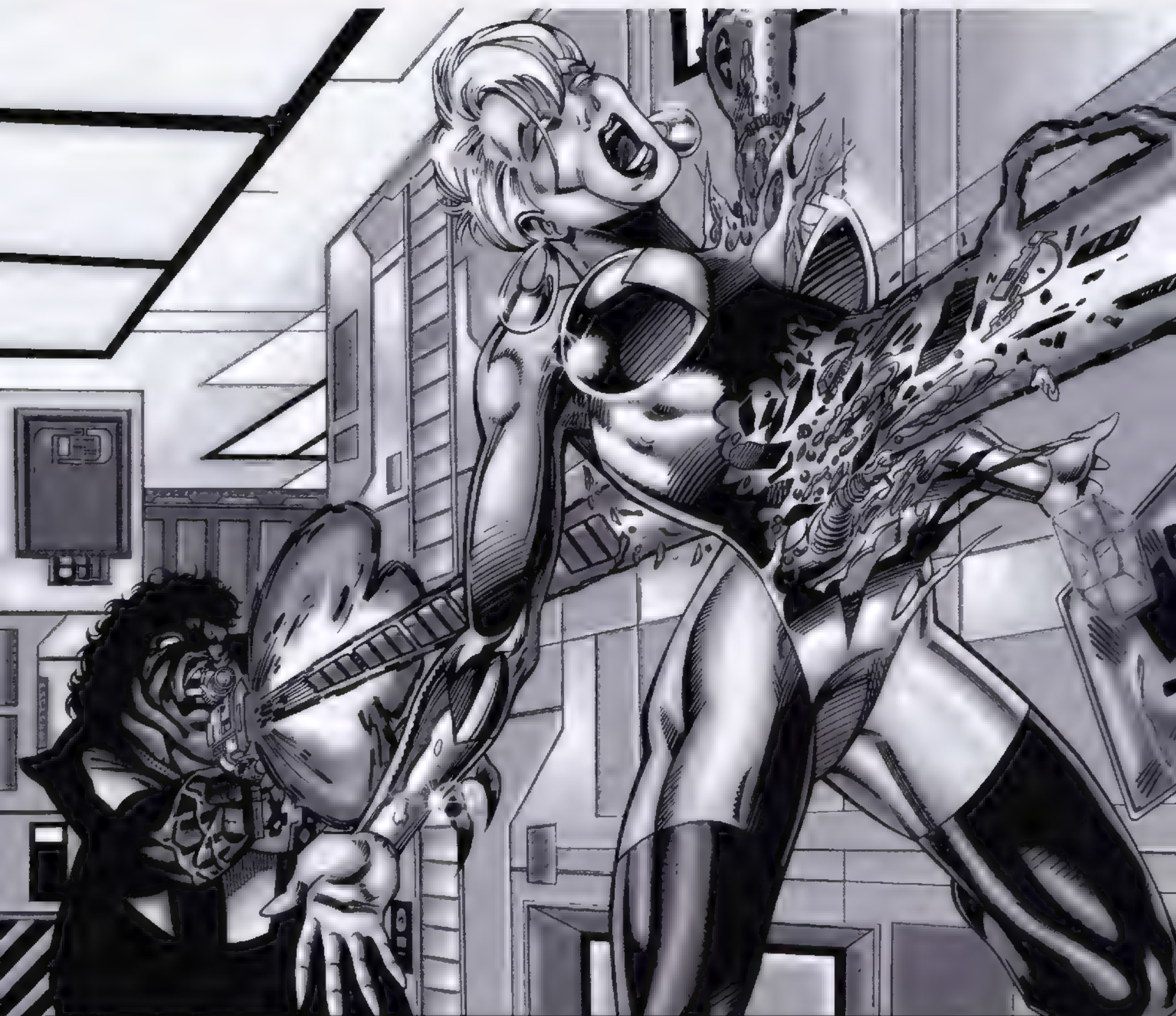
The comic book business is a relaxed and creative place, but still no excuse to slack off on common sense stuff like being a pro. Your emails, texts and instant messages represent you.

These are very simple common sense tips. That's why we tend to forget them some times. I know it's a fast world, but that's no reason you can't keep things at your pace with a little control. If you pay attention others will too.

Your amigo,

Beau Smith  
The Flying Fist Ranch  
beau@flyingfistranch.com





You can sometimes bring about a boost in sales by killing off an established character, but you want to use this kind of twist carefully and sparingly, so you don't damage the universe you're working in. Sometimes you can promise a death, such as this scene in which "Stormquest" character Shalimar gets blasted into oblivion, and then come up with a creative, legitimate way to get out of it. In this case, Shalimar turns out to be an android, so she was simply repaired and re-programmed.

## The Universe at Your Finger Tips Thoughts on Scripting Comic Books **SELLING IT**

by Tom Bierbaum

One of the subtler tricks of the trade that I had trouble mastering was the ability to turn every issue I worked on into something promotable and sellable.

When my wife and I broke into the business, it was surprising to find out how much of the survival of the comic you were writing depended on how much it was ordered by the comic shops around the country, and how much those sales totals could be impacted by an intriguing plot twist that could be touted in some little sales blurb.



As I learned, an important part of your job is to make sure there are some very compelling reasons for readers, shops and distributors to buy your comic. I'll look at these issues today mostly in terms of what it's like writing for an established comic at an established company, recognizing that most Sketch readers aren't yet in that position. Maybe at a later date we can talk more about selling to the business as a newcomer and an independent, but for today, let's imagine you've got a good regular assignment at one of the major companies.

When I grew up reading comics, a kid would go to a corner drug store and see the comic on the rack and if there was something on the cover that grabbed his interest, the drug store and the comic company had bagged a sale. And that brought about an era of great ingenuity on the part of the writers and editors to come up with gimmick covers that persuaded kids to plunk down their 12 cents. Comic companies became masters of psychology, dreaming up puzzling mysteries and impossible twists on their covers that intrigued the kids and virtually demanded that they buy the comic and find out how the incredible cover twist would be explained.

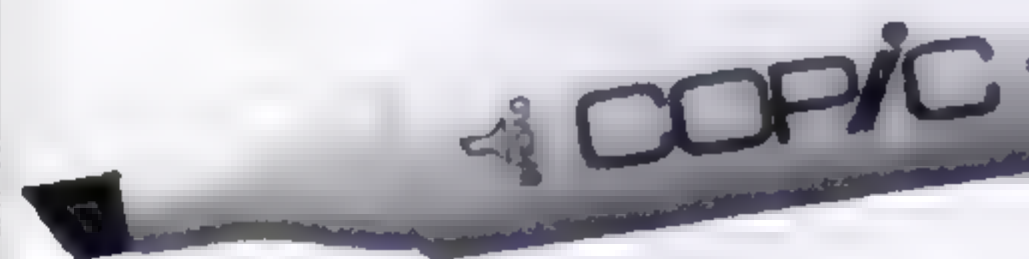
If the cover didn't work so well and the store was left with a lot of unsold copies, the comic companies found out pretty directly. The retailers would remove the covers and send the unsold comics back for refunds. In those days, the industry was getting very direct feedback on what was working with the end customer, the kid, and the industry could respond very directly. So certain bright red costumes, gorillas, dinosaurs and other boy-friendly elements became cover staples, as did those vexing mysteries and impossible twists, because they were the things that got kids to buy comics.

These days, the mechanism is a little different and it isn't as simple as just giving the readers what they want to read. These days, most of the business is done in stores that specialize in comics (and related items) and these shops generally do not have the option of returning the comics they can't sell.

So the first step before you can worry about selling to the reader is to sell to the shop. And before you can even do that, you may have to also sell to the distributor from whom the shop orders its comics. There are literally hundreds of comics coming out every month, so many of the shops can't take the time to make informed decisions about exactly what to buy and in what quantities. So they rely heavily on the recommendations of their distributors.

And those recommendations sometimes are based on a few superficial characteristics of a particular issue. The distributor may suggest that orders be cut or increased based on the creative team — if there are "star" creators on a book, that usually drives a certain level of

# WE CARRY A FULL LINE OF COPIC MARKERS & SUPPLIES



**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES  
**BLUELINEPRO.COM**



sales. And if that “star” leaves your team, you can find your sales automatically dropping simply because the star has left and the distributor recommends that the stores cut their orders. Your bosses see the sales go down and you might lose the assignment when you never really had a chance to avoid that drop in sales.

But you can influence this process as the writer of the book by conceiving of each issue as a separate product that has to be marketed to that distributor, and therefore has to have some promotable, sales-boosting aspect to it. When your publisher sends the distributors and stores a couple sentences describing what’s going to be in the issue, make sure there’s something in that blurb that demands they buy your book. In the same way the comic writers and editors of earlier generations came up with gimmick covers to excite the kids, you now have to come up with story twists that excite distributors.

So how do you do that? What kinds of simple plot elements can you include in a tiny blurb that will actually compel the distributor to recommend increased orders?

There are some obvious answers – life-changing events like killing off a character, marrying off a couple, having a character get pregnant/have a baby, advance a romantic relationship or end a long-standing relationship.

All of these should be used with a lot of caution. The reason they motivate so much interest is because they usually bring about some pretty profound change to the concept you’re working on, and the wrong kind of change or too much of even the right kind of change can sink a successful concept fast.

There are less risky things you can do:

- Create the kinds of twists that used to be featured on those old gimmick covers – promise a story that seems impossible and compel readers to find out how you manage to pull it off.
- Create a mystery – generally people find it almost irresistible to find out what the answer is to some key plot puzzle.

- Create a secret that one of your characters is harboring and situations where that secret may be revealed.
- Resolve a standing problem or question in the comic’s continuity, especially if there’s something along these lines that the readers have been clamoring for (while taking care not to get tangled up in trivial continuity that only a small fraction of the readership cares about).
- Along the same lines, listen to the readers and figure out the aspects of your comic that are most piquing their interest and are most directly compelling them to rush out and buy every issue.
- Talk with your local shop owner and workers and get advice from them on what the readers are responding to and what gets the shop to order more copies of a comic.
- Do a team-up – bring in a character that’s popular and drives sales, especially if seeing that character side-by-side with yours is unusual and hard to imagine.
- Introduce a new character. Create an intriguing new hero, villain, relative to the hero, or in some other way, get people wondering if this addition to your cast might just be the next big thing in comics and this will be their chance to own a first appearance.
- Potential new love interests can be especially interesting and if you can create an ongoing attraction between two characters, the possibility that the relationship might progress can always spark extra interest.
- Give a central character some interesting facelift – a disguise, a transformation, an undercover role that’s intriguing or sexy or difficult to imagine. People like to see familiar characters in different forms — there’s a reason the old Superman comics used to tell so many “Red Kryptonite” stories.



- Consider the season in which your comic hits the stands. People have a lot of intense and positive associations with holidays like Halloween and Christmas and a theme issue properly timed might generate some extra interest.
- What's popular in the culture at large? Remembering the time lag between when you conceive of a story and when a reader will see it. Figure out if there's something big happening in the culture that you can refer to, spin off of or lampoon (taking care to avoid using the names of real people or referring to ideas owned by others). There's a reason TV does so many episodes that are "ripped from the headlines."
- What hasn't been done before? It's a tall order, but if you can think of something that hasn't been tried before in comics or hasn't been tried very often, that may be something that will generate some curiosity.
- Is your company doing a big crossover? If so, it's really worth your while to participate. You're almost guaranteed to get extra sales if your issue is part of a big crossover, and those extra sales represent a different group of readers who weren't buying your book before but have now been given a reason to sample what you're doing.

These are some of the ways you can stir up interest in your issue with the distributor, the stores and ultimately the reader. To some of you, this kind of thing may seem like a creative compromise, crafting your stories around completely commercial concerns. But sometimes your continued employment relies on dealing with these kinds of concerns and finding a way to single-handedly lift sales.

If you find yourself in that position, my advice is to do what you have to do to sell the book and think of the commercial story elements you're stuck with as a starting point. You were going to have to figure out a story idea anyway and if finding the commercial hook gets you started, then in a way, it's made your job easier. Then throw yourself into the plot and make it the best story you can make it. Find your satisfaction in producing amazing quality and a

unique story that only you could have written, even if the starting point wasn't really your first choice. You can still turn that story into the kind of comic that you'd love to read.

I always feel like it's a lot easier to succeed creatively with a broadly entertaining idea done with great quality than it is to do the opposite, taking a narrow-interest idea and trying to present it in a broad-appeal sort of way.

In any case, always be mindful of the long-term health of the concept you're working on. You can come off as phony and pandering if you chase too eagerly after anything and everything that might bring a bump in sales. And you might do real damage to the universe you're working in if your attempts to boost interest get too artificial and transparent.

The industry will rebel if you promise some big payoff and don't really deliver it. Or if killing characters off becomes a habit and you turn your universe into a miserable place swimming in death. Don't resort to cop-out devices ("it was all a dream") to explain away some big twist you've promised but can't really deliver.

There's a real art to keeping readers on their toes so they know anything can happen, while at the same time keeping the overall concept on a steady, believable, enjoyable path. Find that balance and you've got a fighting chance to get the distributors and stores excited every month while also keeping your readers happy over the long haul.

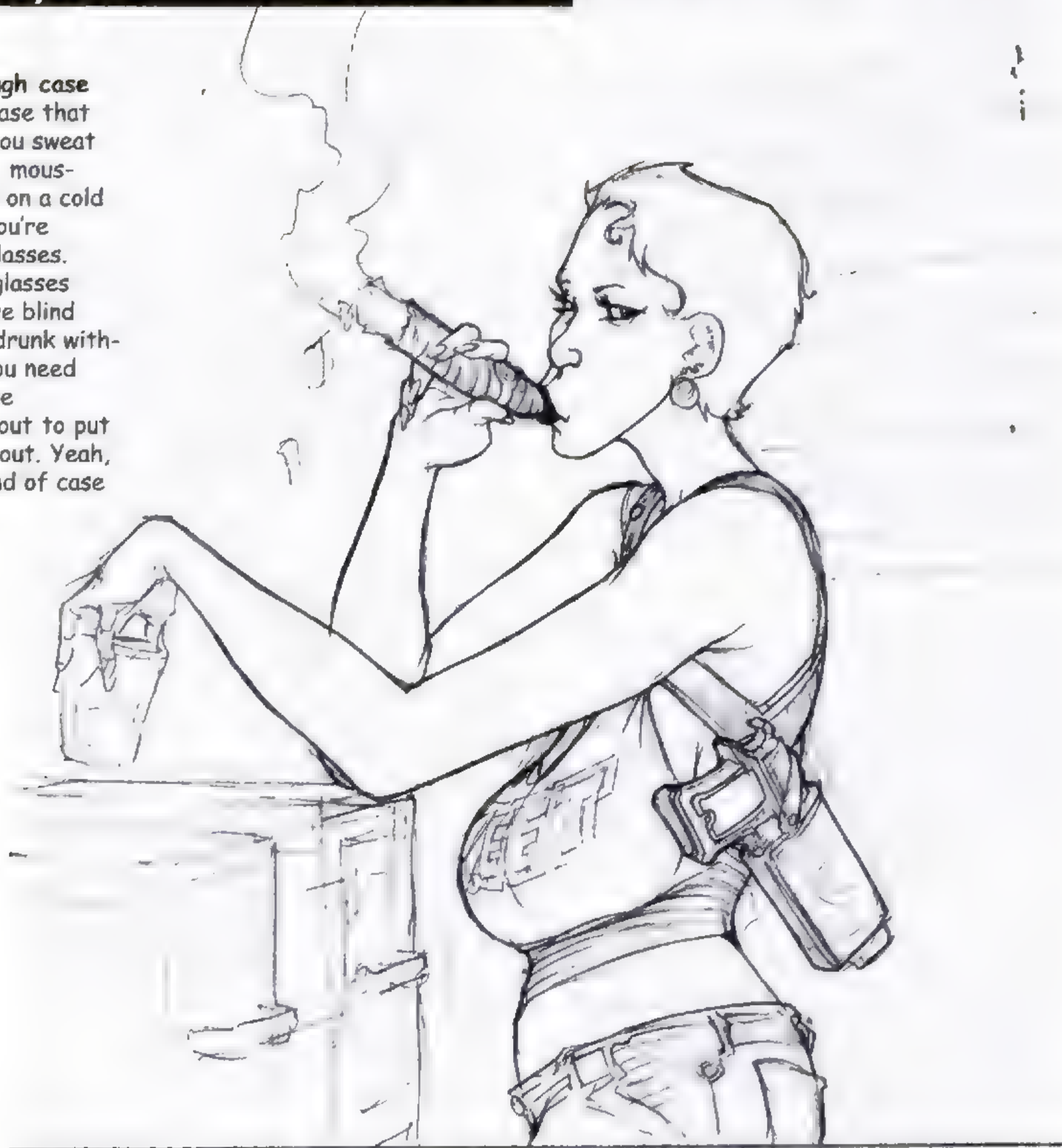


Notes to Draw From

# Draw The Dialogue Out

by Mitch Byrd

"It was a tough case the kind of case that would make you sweat through your moustache. Sweat on a cold night while you're wearing sunglasses. Wearing sunglasses because you're blind drunk. Blind drunk without power. You need power because someone's about to put you're lights out. Yeah, that's the kind of case it was."



"So, you found my dog or not?"



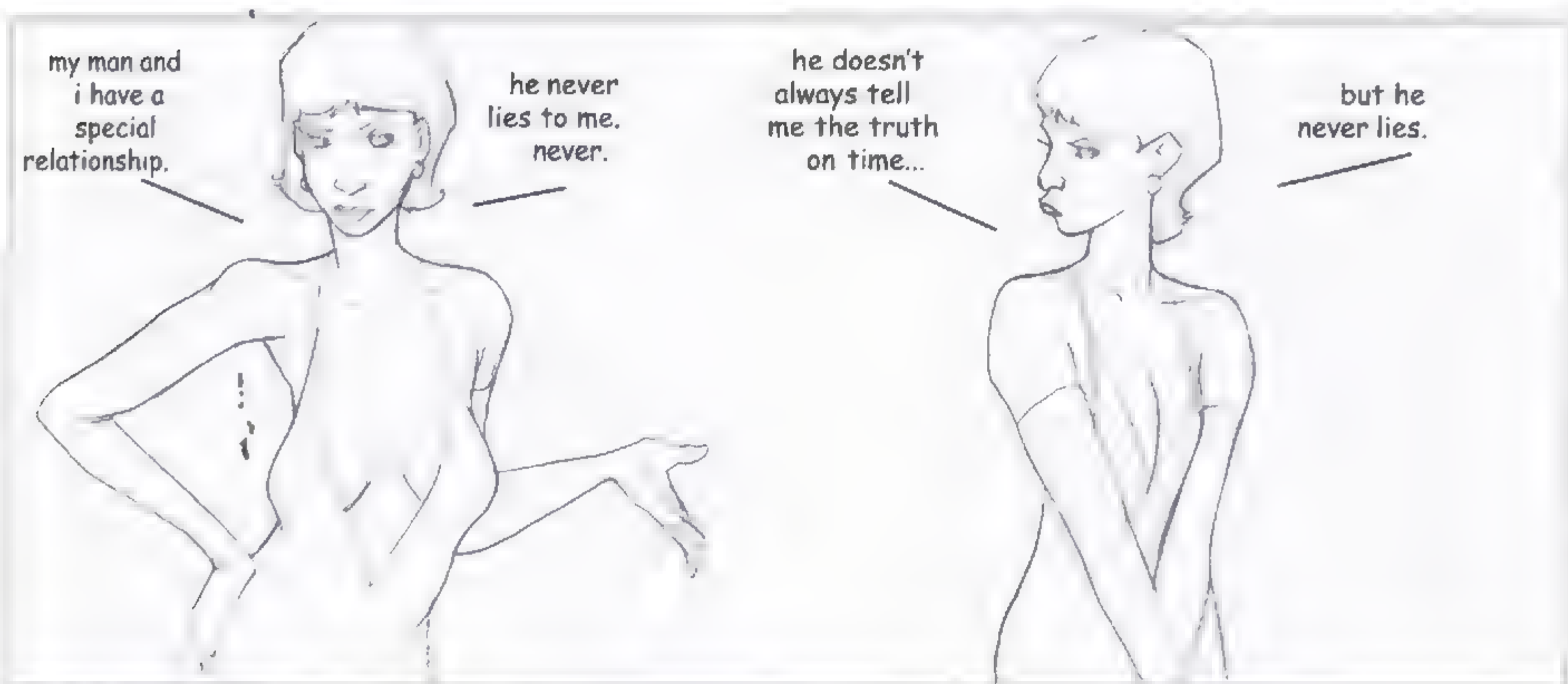
You don't have to cram all of your dialogue into one word balloon or caption. If all of the words are corralled into one area, it almost ceases being dialogue and starts to become text. Plus, you need to account for different portions of the dialogue requiring different emotional delivery. One drawing of the character, one expression per drawing.

Simple solution: spread the dialogue out among the several drawings with each drawing delivering the expression or action that the character would perform relative to that portion of dialogue. By doing this, your characters won't be blurting out soliloquies, but will be "acting out" their lines.

Think of it as timing, like a comedian. How fortunate for this article that I have some comedians "appearing".

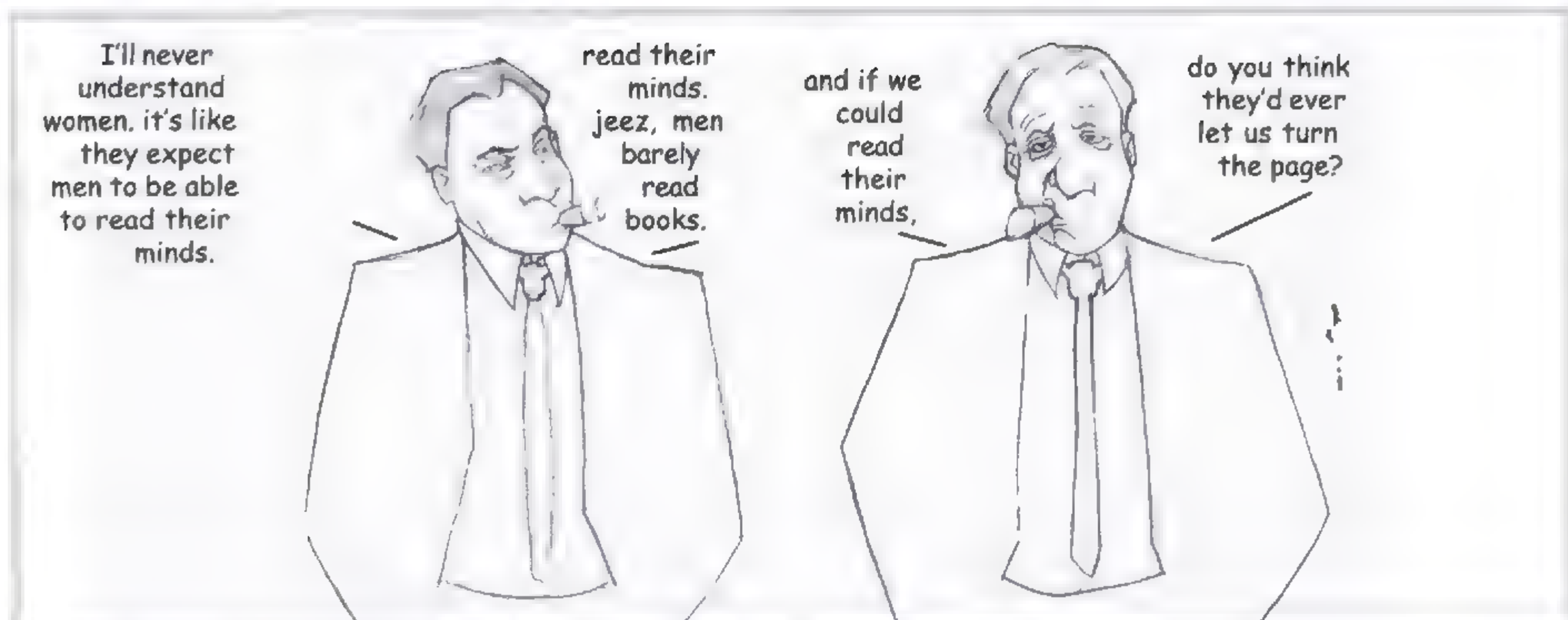


Comedians don't just speak lines; they deliver them.



And deliver them in ways that make them distinctive from other joke tellers.

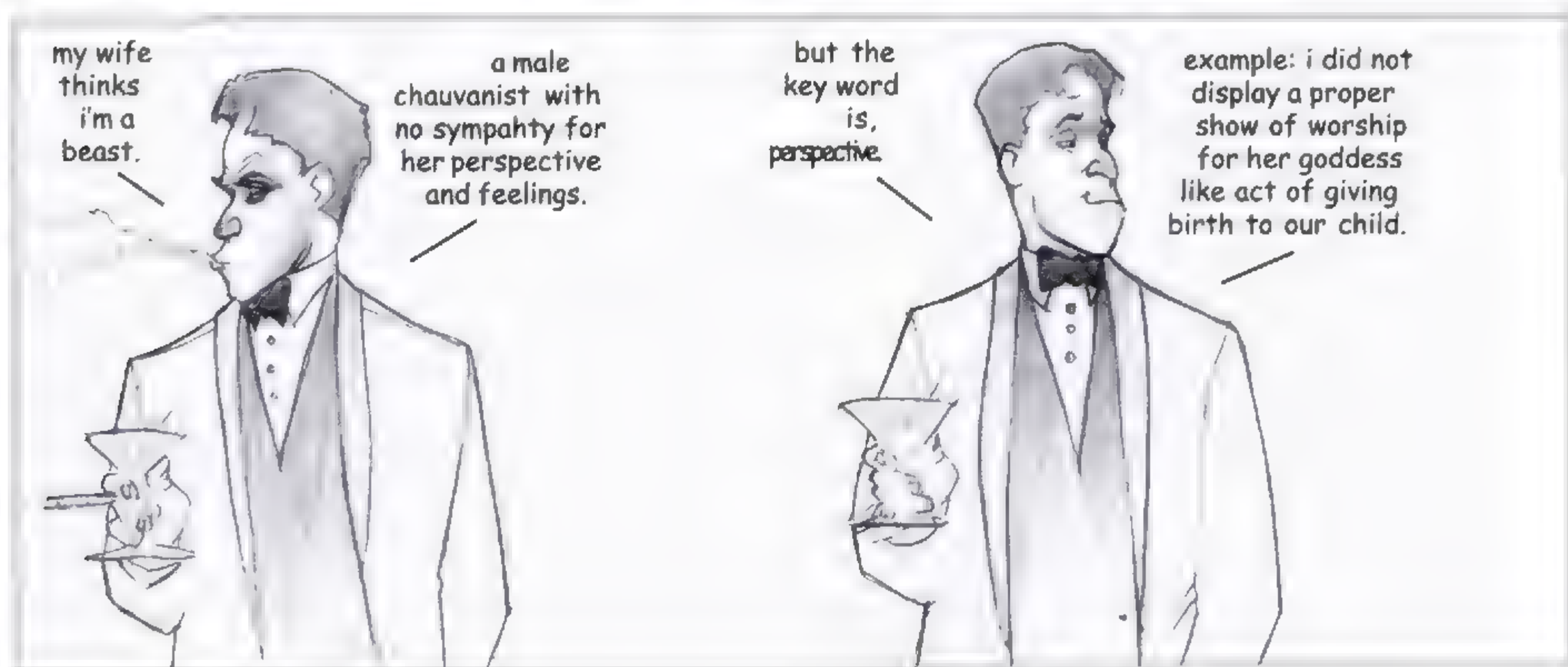




Distinctive doesn't have to be distinguished.



Not only do people look different, but they act differently with expressions and body language.

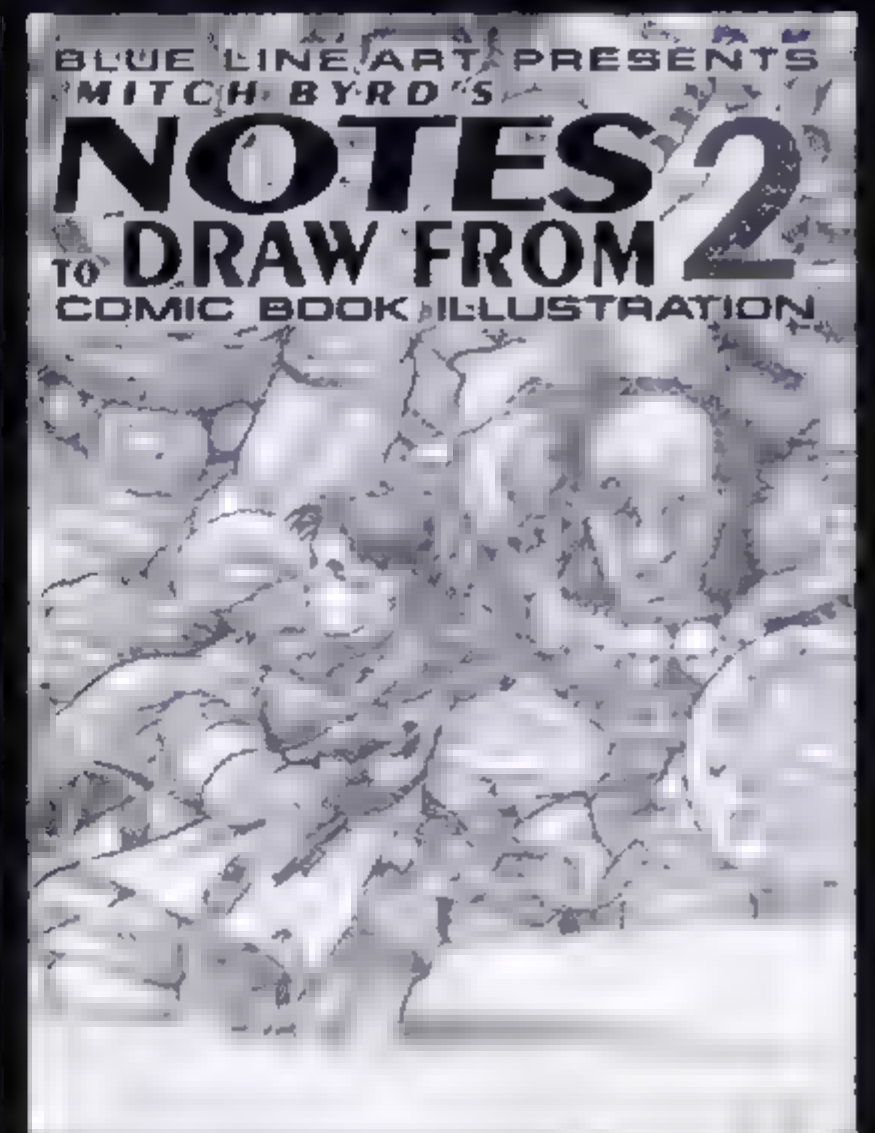
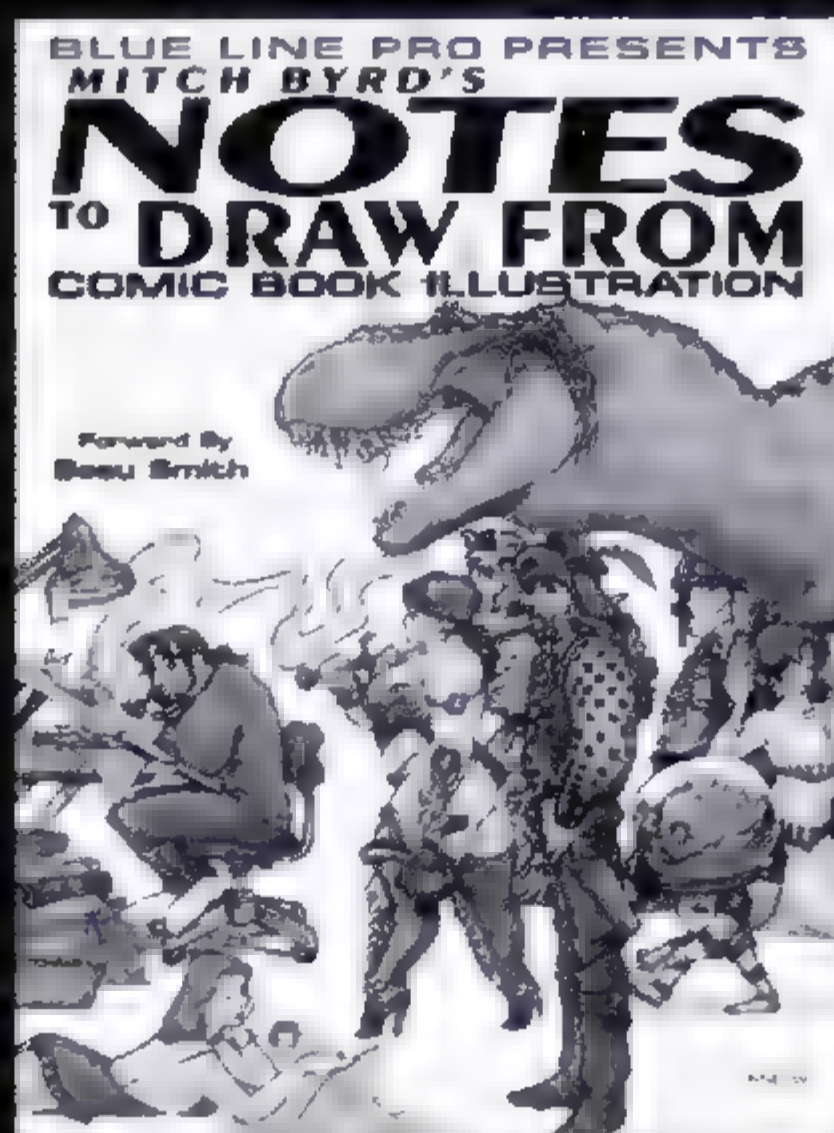
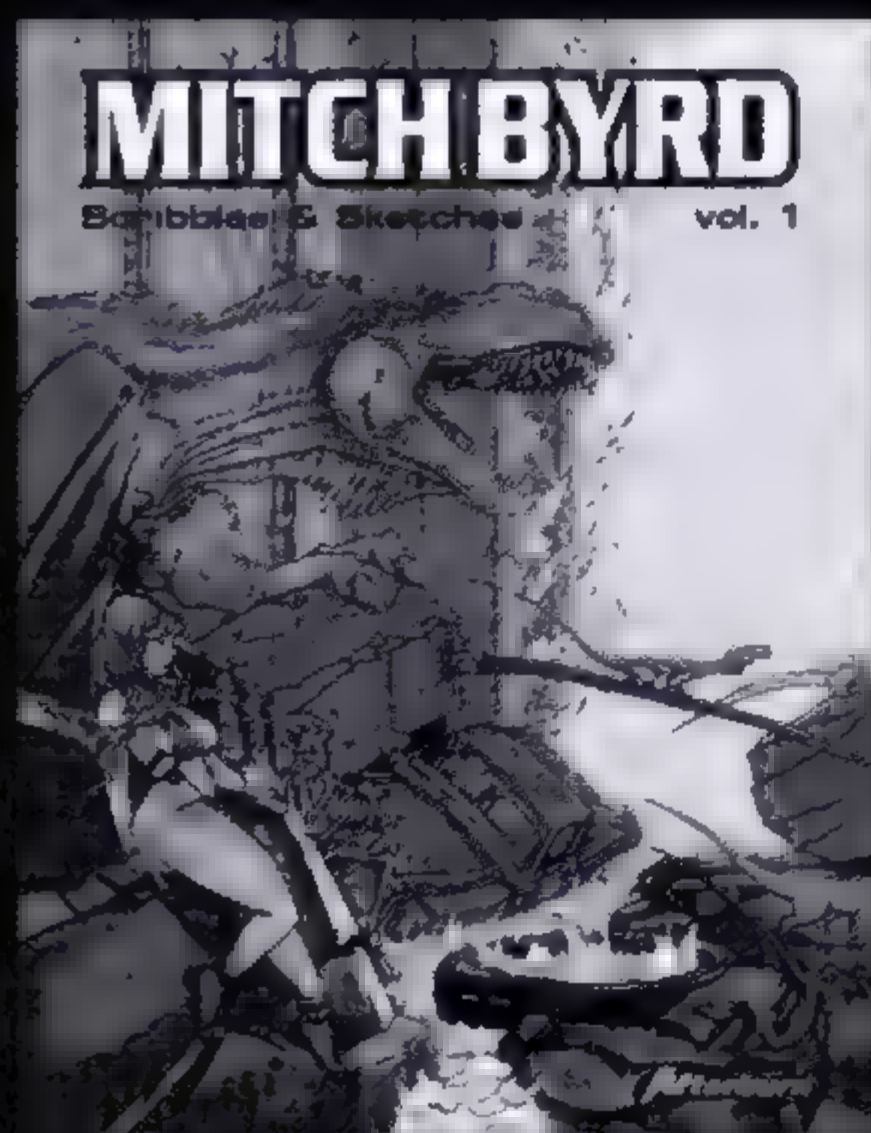




So, when your characters have something to say, give them the room to say it. Oops, not just say it, but express what they have to say.



Also from Blue Line Art





**Need A Bar Code?**



**We Can Help  
Blue Line Pro  
859-282-0096  
info@bluelinepro.com**



# SKETCH MAGAZINE ART CONTEST!

## DRAW YOUR FAVORITE INCREDIBLE HULK BATTLE WINNERS!



James Anthony T. Huang



Raga Salvador



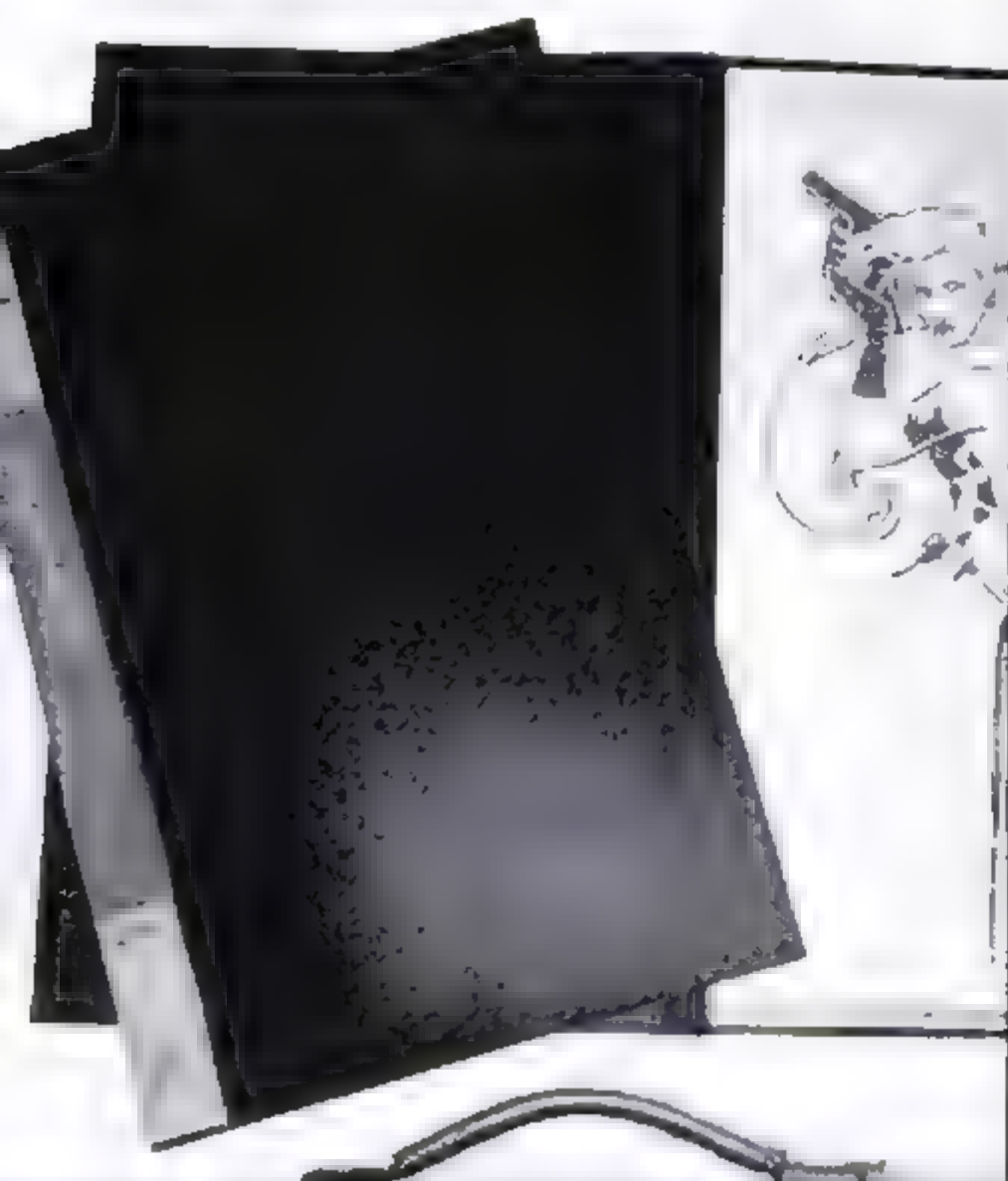
Sam Vitikainen



Gavin Michelli



**PROTECT  
YOUR  
ORIGINAL  
ARTWORK**



**ARTFOLIOS  
PORTFOLIOS  
SLEEVES  
BAGS**



**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES  
**BLUELINEPRO.COM**

# SKETCH MAGAZINE ART CONTEST!

**WINNERS!**



**Nathan Stockman**



**Sam Kivelä**



**John Duckett**



**Long Vo & Mark McKenna**



# **Blue Line Art** **COMIC BOOK AND MANGA** **ART PRODUCTS**



**DESIGNED WITH THE HOBBYIST AND PROFESSIONAL IN MIND!**

**Blue Line Art Comic Book Art Boards** have been the *industry standard* since 1990. **Blue Line Art** provides professional level art boards to publishers, comic book artists, hobbyists and aspiring artists alike. Many of the comics you see on stands today are drawn on **Blue Line Art Boards!**



# COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS

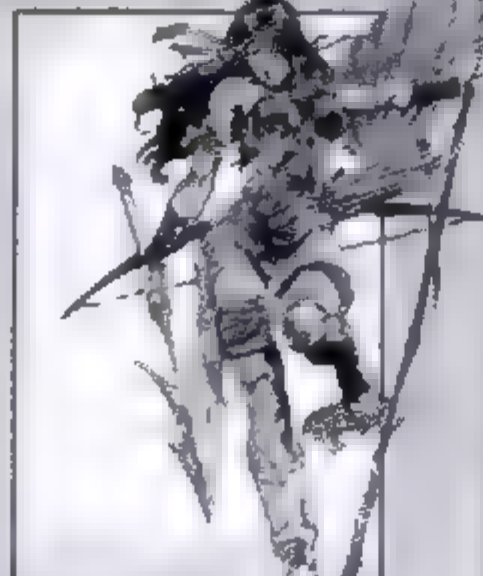
## Blue Line Art COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS



### REGULAR COMIC BOOK ART BOARD

- (Pack of 10 sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1003-10/UPC 85454900020 1  
Price \$14.95
- (Pack of 24 sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1003-24/UPC 85454900003 4  
Price \$14.95

## Blue Line Art COMIC BOOK PRO TRADITIONAL ART BOARDS



### PRO TRADITIONAL COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS

- (Pack of 10 sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1001-10/UPC 85454900019 5  
Price \$9.95
- (Pack of 24 sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1001-24/UPC 85454900001 0  
Price \$18.95

## Blue Line Art COMIC BOOK PRO FULL TRIM ART BOARDS



### PRO FULL TRIM COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS

- (Pack of 10 sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1038-10/UPC 85454900039 3  
Price \$9.95
- (Pack of 24 sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1038-24/UPC 85454900038 6  
Price \$18.95

## Blue Line Art COMIC BOOK COVER SHEET ART BOARDS



### COMIC BOOK COVER ART BOARDS

- (Pack of 12 Sheets) 11x17  
Item No. BL1007-12/UPC 85454900007 2  
Price \$11.95

## Blue Line Art ILLUSTRATION PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS



### ILLUSTRATION COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS

- PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS  
(24 Sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1012-24/UPC 85454900012 6  
Price \$18.95
- PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS  
(10 Sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1012-10/UPC 85454900015 7  
Price \$9.95
- PREMIERE 400 SMOOTH 3 PLY  
(STRATHMORE)  
(12 Sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1013-12/UPC 85454900013 3  
Price \$32.95
- PREMIERE 400 REGULAR 3 PLY  
(STRATHMORE)  
(12 Sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1014-12/UPC 85454900014 0  
Price \$32.95

## Blue Line Art RULED PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS



### RULED PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS

- PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS  
(24 Sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1017-24/UPC 85454900017 1  
Price \$18.95
- PRO COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS  
(10 Sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1017-10/UPC 85454900016 4  
Price \$9.95
- PREMIERE 300 SMOOTH  
(STRATHMORE)  
(12 Sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1036-12/UPC 85454900036 2  
Price \$19.95
- PREMIERE 300 REGULAR  
(STRATHMORE)  
(12 Sheets) 11 x 17  
Item No. BL1037-12/UPC 85454900037 9  
Price \$19.95

## Blue Line Art PREMIERE COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS



### Premiere Series Full Trim Format

(11 x 17) with 15 1/4 x 10 3/8 image borders with 9 x 13 3/4 safe dotted border area/bagged. Preprinted with a non-photo blue border that is the trademark of all Blue Line Art boards. This allows the artist to draw comics the actual size that professionals do. Professionals draw their illustrations larger than they appear in the finished product to help minimize mistakes. The main advantage of Strathmore is its 100% acid free feature. This prevents signs of aging such as yellowing. Premiere Comic Book Art Boards serves as the leading comic book art boards of the comic book industry.

### PREMIERE COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS (Professional Quality) (All packs include 12 sheets of 11 x 17)

- 300 SMOOTH (STRATHMORE 300)  
Item No. BL1041-12/UPC 85454900041 6  
Price \$19.95
- 300 REGULAR (STRATHMORE 300)  
Item No. BL1042-12  
Price \$19.95  
UPC 85454900042 3
- 400 SMOOTH 2 PLY (STRATHMORE)  
Item No. BL1043-12/UPC 85454900043 0  
Price \$21.95
- 400 REGULAR 2 PLY (STRATHMORE)  
Item No. BL1044-12/UPC 85454900044 7  
Price \$21.95
- 400 SMOOTH 3 PLY (STRATHMORE)  
Item No. BL1045-12/UPC 85454900045 4  
Price \$32.95
- 400 REGULAR 3 PLY (STRATHMORE)  
Item No. BL1046-12/UPC 85454900046 1  
Price \$32.95
- 500 SMOOTH 2 PLY (STRATHMORE)  
Item No. BL1047-12/UPC 85454900047 8  
Price \$47.95
- 500 REGULAR 2 PLY (STRATHMORE)  
Item No. BL1048-12/UPC 85454900048 5  
Price \$47.95
- 500 SMOOTH 3 PLY (STRATHMORE)  
Item No. BL1049-12/UPC 85454900049 2  
Price \$66.95
- 500 REGULAR 3 PLY (STRATHMORE)  
Item No. BL1050-12/UPC 85454900049 2  
Price \$66.95



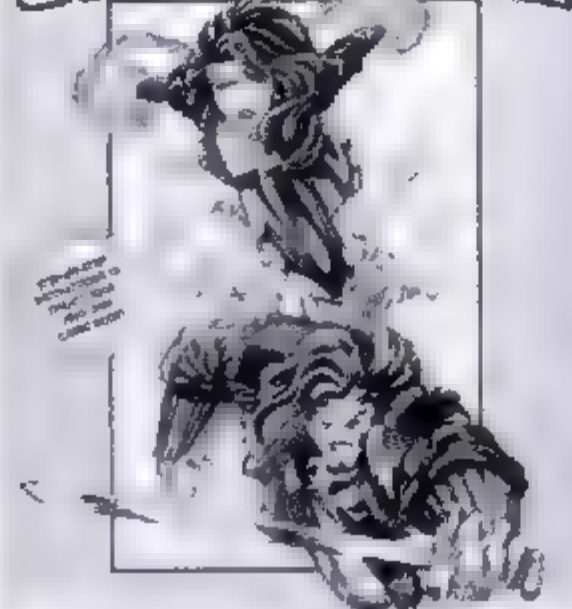
# Blue Line Art

## Blue Line Art SAMPLER 3

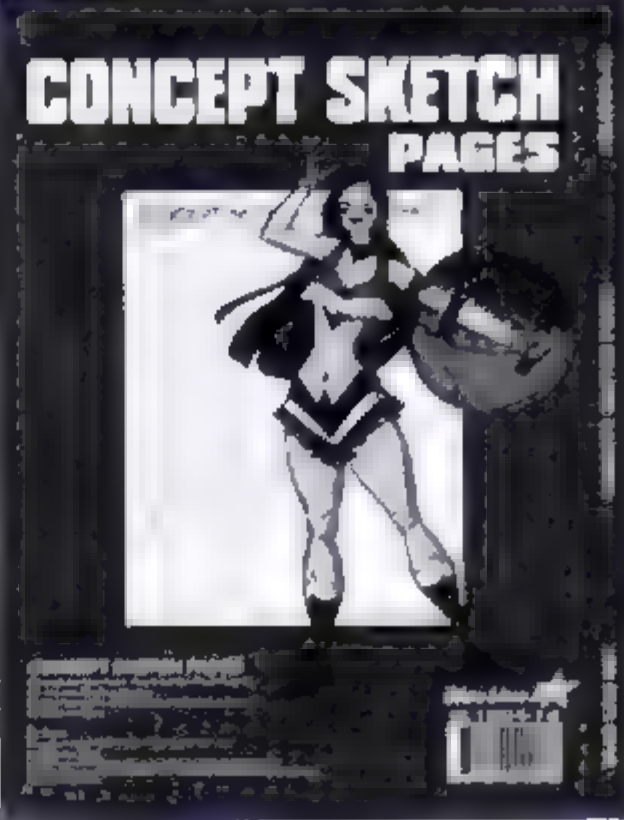


BLUE LINE ART SAMPLER 3  
Item No. BL1040  
Price \$16.95/UPC 854549000409

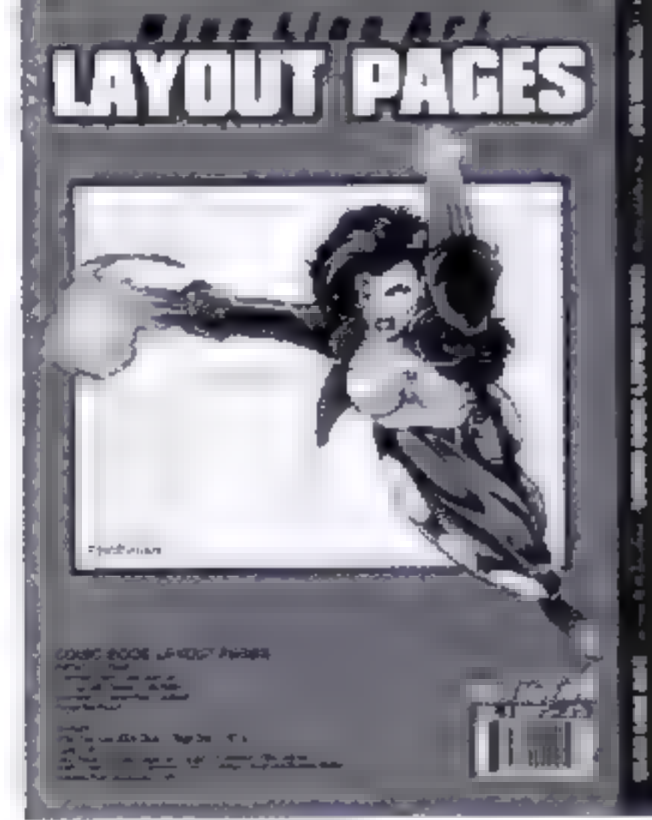
## Blue Line Art CREATE YOUR OWN COMIC BOOK!



CREATE YOUR OWN COMIC BOOK!  
Item No. BL1002/UPC 854549000027  
Price \$19.95



CONCEPT SKETCH PAGES  
• 8 1/2 x 11 (Pack of 12 sheets)  
Item No. BL1004-12/UPC 854549000089  
Price \$5.95  
• 8 1/2 x 11 (Pack of 25 sheets)  
Item No. BL1004-25/UPC 854549000041  
Price \$10.95



LAYOUT PAGES  
• 8 1/2 x 11 (35 Sheets)  
Item No. BL1005-35/UPC 854549000068  
Price \$5.95



SMALL COMIC BOOK ART BOARDS  
• Premiere 400 series 2 ply Smooth  
8 1/2 x 11 (15 SHEETS)  
Item No. BL1061-12/UPC  
Price \$20.95

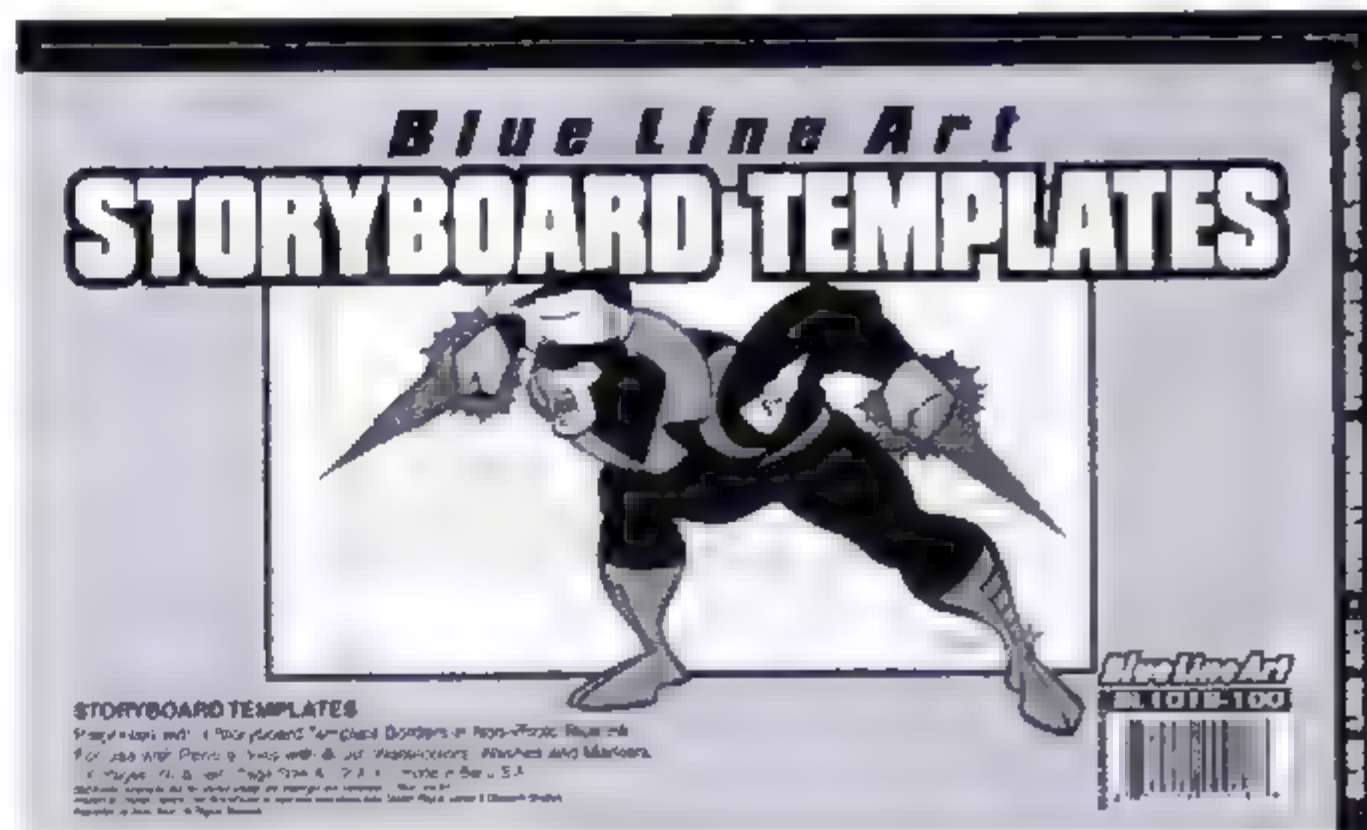


BLUE LINE PRO SMOOTH PAD  
• 11 x 17 (15 SHEETS)  
Item No. BL1075-15/UPC 854549000075  
Price \$9.95

## Blue Line Art COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS

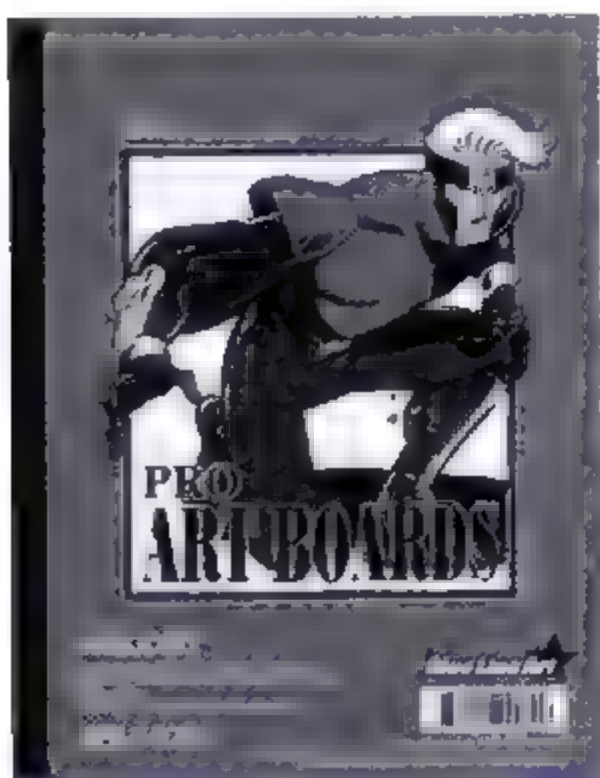
COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS  
Provides comic strip artists a fast-track Blue Line Pro Smooth Pad for comic strip art. Includes 100 sheets of 4 x 13 comic strip art boards. Each sheet is pre-printed with a grid of 10 panels. Each panel is 4 x 13 inches. Each sheet is pre-printed with a grid of 10 panels. Each panel is 4 x 13 inches. Each sheet is pre-printed with a grid of 10 panels. Each panel is 4 x 13 inches.

COMIC STRIP ART BOARDS  
• 4 x 13 (14 Sheets) 4 x 13  
Item No. BL1052-14/UPC 854549000052  
Price \$14.95



STORYBOARD TEMPLATES  
Provides comic strip artists a fast-track Blue Line Pro Smooth Pad for comic strip art. Includes 100 sheets of 8 1/2 x 14 storyboard templates. Each sheet is pre-printed with a grid of 10 panels. Each panel is 8 1/2 x 14 inches. Each sheet is pre-printed with a grid of 10 panels. Each panel is 8 1/2 x 14 inches.

STORYBOARD TEMPLATES  
• 8 1/2 x 14 (100 Sheets)  
Item No. BL1018-100/UPC 854549000188  
Price \$16.95



BLUE LINE PRO SMOOTH PAD  
• 8 1/2 x 11 (15 SHEETS)  
Item No. BL1070-15/UPC 854549000070  
Price \$5.95



POCKET SKETCH PAD  
• 5 x 9 1/2 (50 Sheets)  
Item No. BL1051-50  
Price \$6.95  
UPC 8545490000515



ARTIST SKETCH CARDS  
• 2 1/2 x 3 1/2 (12 cards)  
Item No. BL1060-12  
Price \$9.95  
UPC 8545490000607



MANGA SKETCH POSTCARDS  
• 3 1/2 x 5 1/2 (90 x 140 mm)  
3" x 5 1/4" printed frame  
ITEM MA007/UPC  
SRP \$5.95



# Blue Line Art



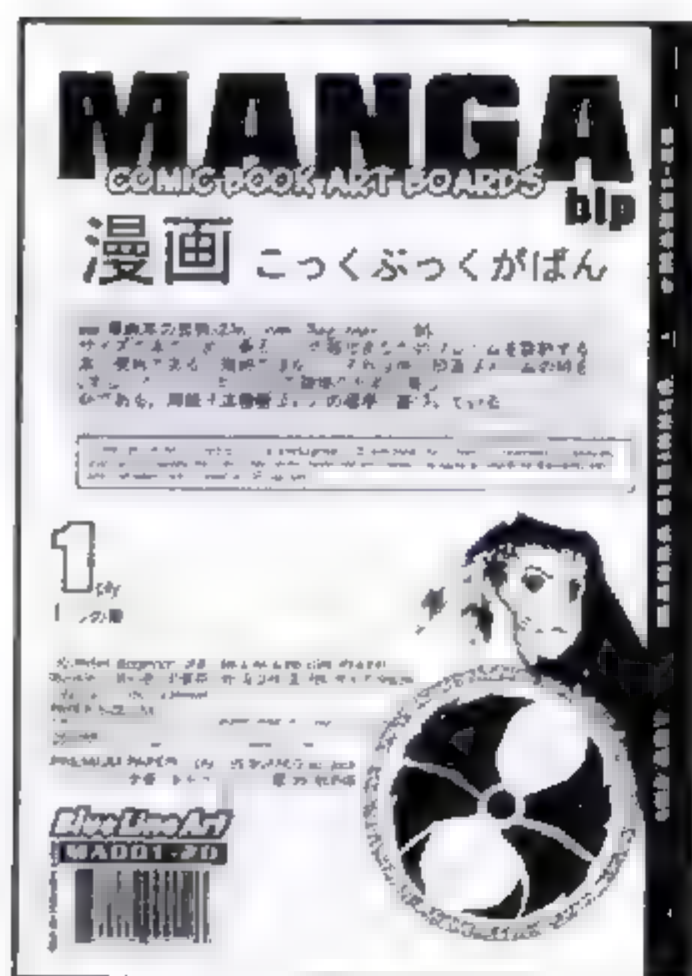
**STORYBOARD FRAMES**  
• 8 1/2 x 14 (50 SHEETS)  
Item No. BL1053-50/UPC 854549000539  
Price \$10.95



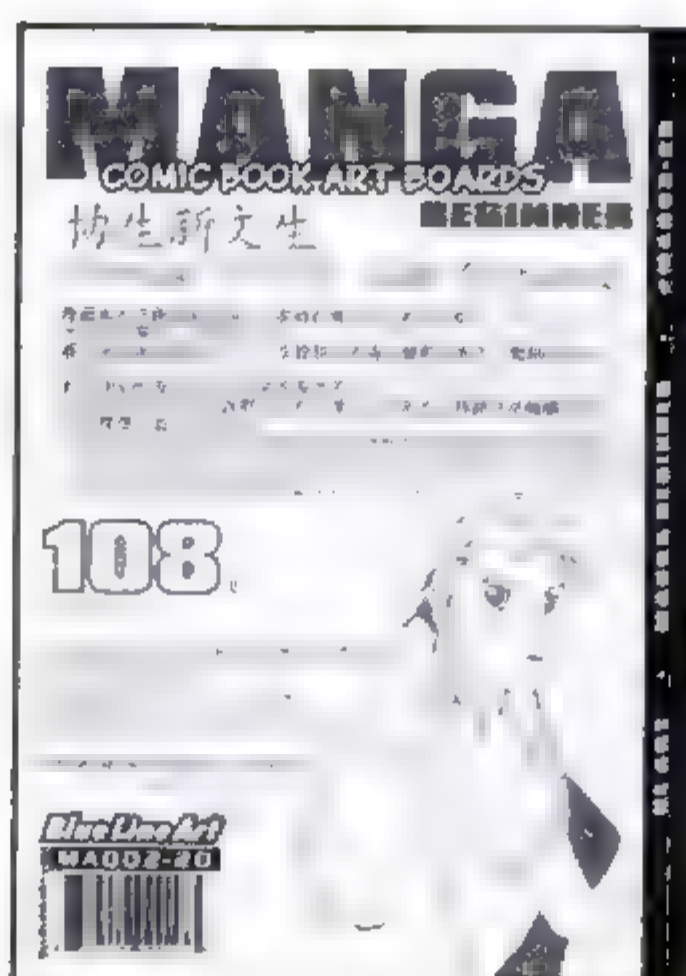
**COMIC SKETCHBOOKS**  
(2 books per pack)  
• Traveler Sized (8 1/2" x 5 1/2")  
Item No. BL1065-2/UPC 854549000652  
Price \$7.95  
• Comic Sized 10 1/4" x 6 3/4"  
Item No. BL1066-2/UPC 854549000669  
Price \$9.95



**SKETCH BOOK SERIES**  
• (8 1/2" x 11") 200 pg. Hard cover book.  
Item BL1010/  
SRP \$28.95  
• (11" x 17") 200 pg. Hard cover book.  
Item BL1011  
SRP \$32.95



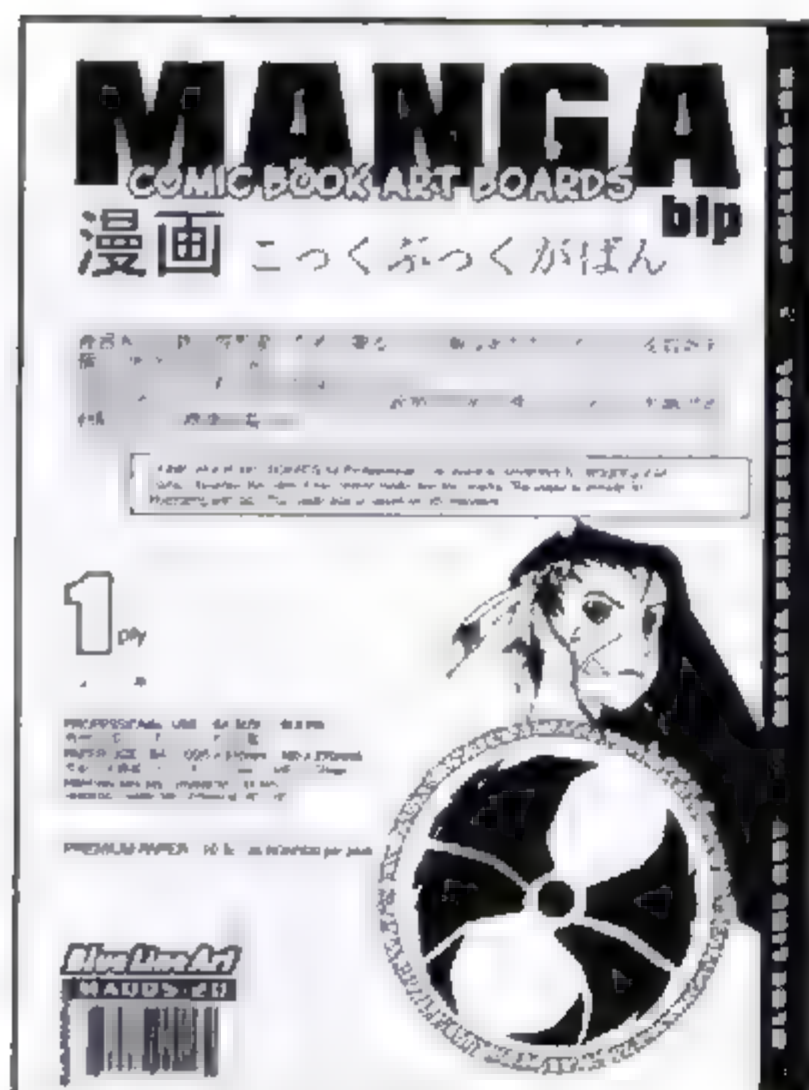
**MANGA COMIC BOOK PAPER (A4) 1PLY**  
• 8 1/4 x 11 3/4 (20 SHEETS)  
Item No. MA001-20/UPC 854549000126  
Price \$7.95



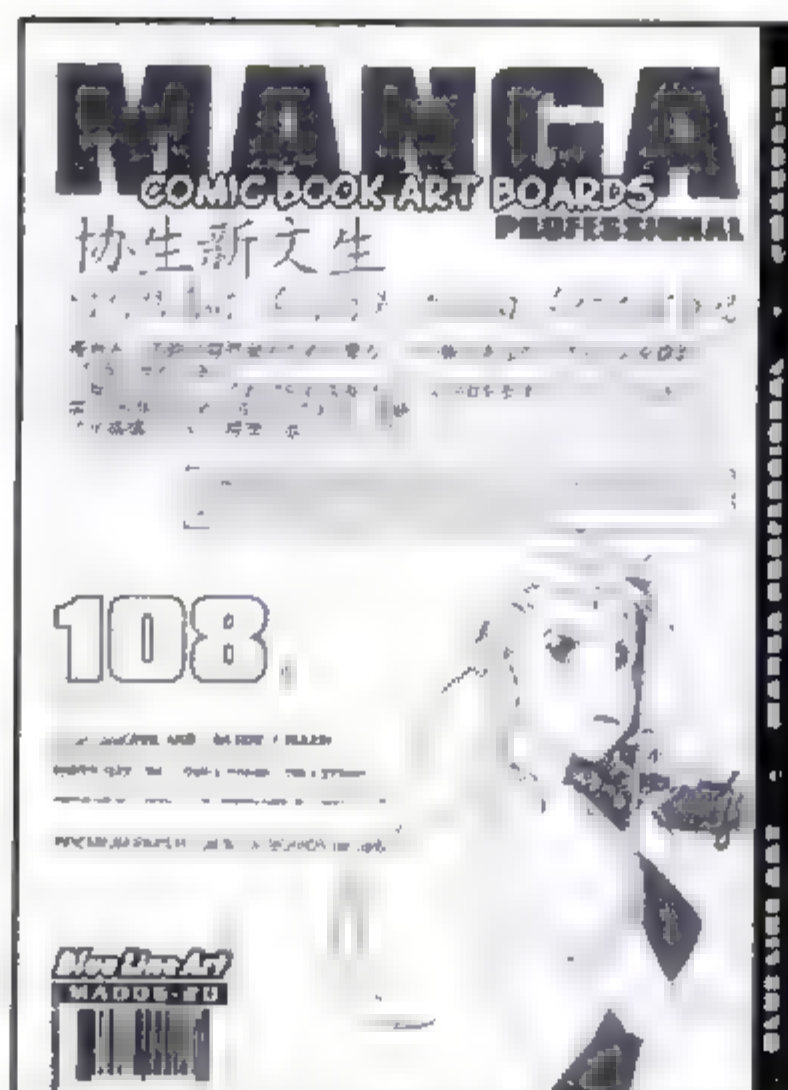
**MANGA COMIC BOOK PAPER (A4) 1PLY**  
• 8 1/4 x 11 3/4 (20 SHEETS)  
Item No. MA002-20/UPC 854549000133  
Price \$9.95



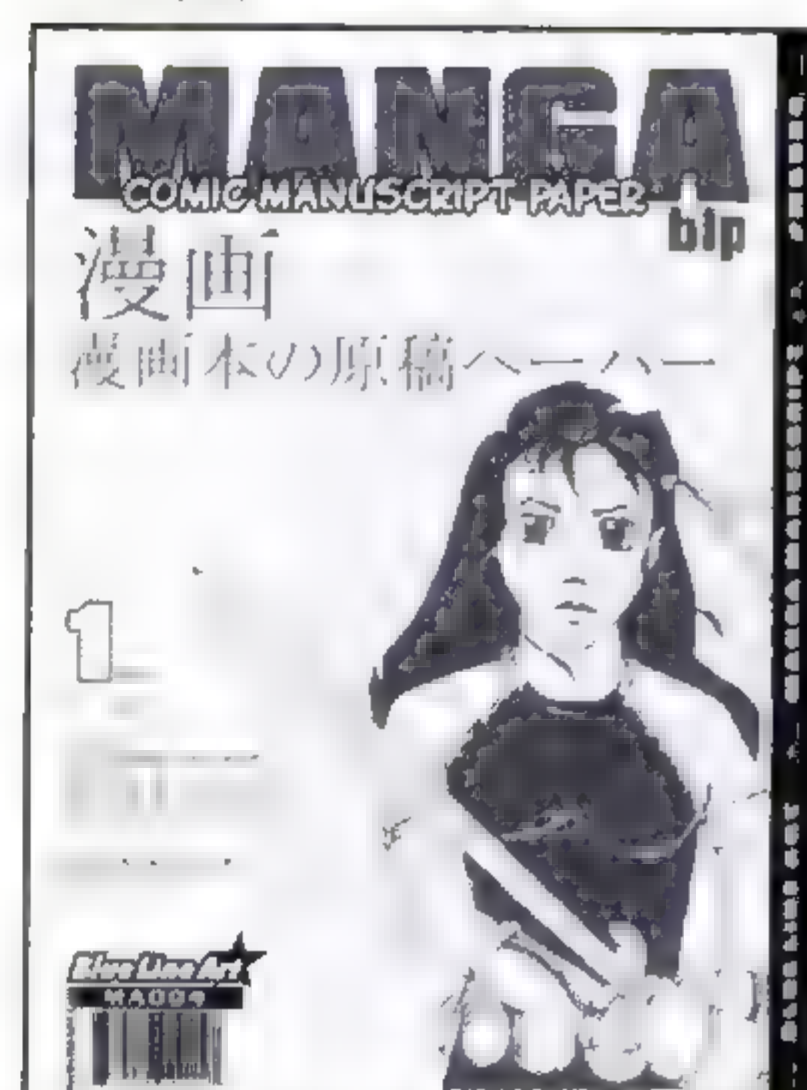
**MANGA COMIC BOOK PAPER (A4) 1PLY**  
• 8 1/4 x 11 3/4 (20 SHEETS)  
Item No. MA003-20  
Price \$6.95



**MANGA COMIC BOOK PAPER (A4) 1PLY**  
• 10 x 14 1/4 (20 SHEETS)  
Item No. MA005-20/UPC 854549000164  
Price \$10.95



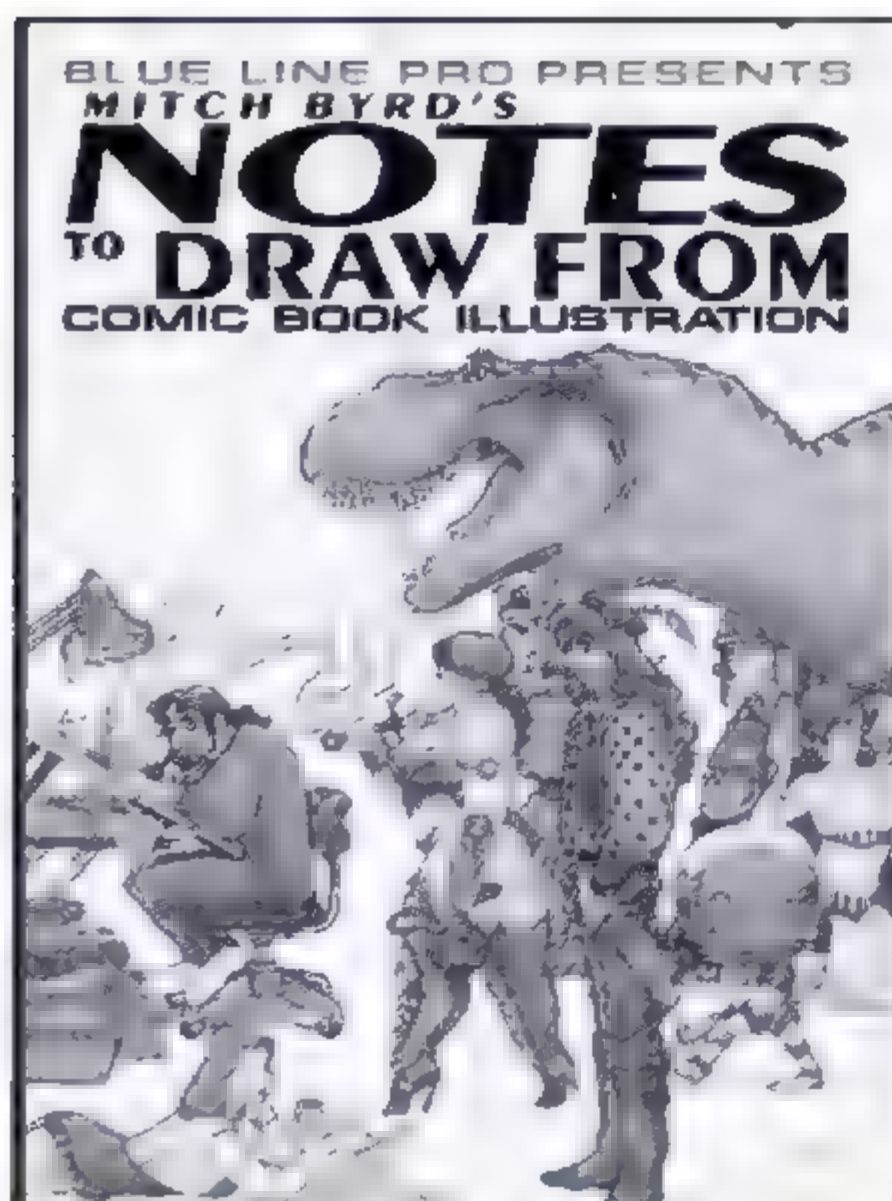
**MANGA COMIC BOOK PAPER (A4) 1PLY**  
• 10 x 14 1/4 (20 SHEETS)  
Item No. MA006-20/UPC 854549000171  
Price \$11.95



**MANGA COMIC BOOK PAPER (A4) 1PLY**  
• 10 x 14 1/4 (20 SHEETS)  
Item No. MA004-20  
Price \$9.95

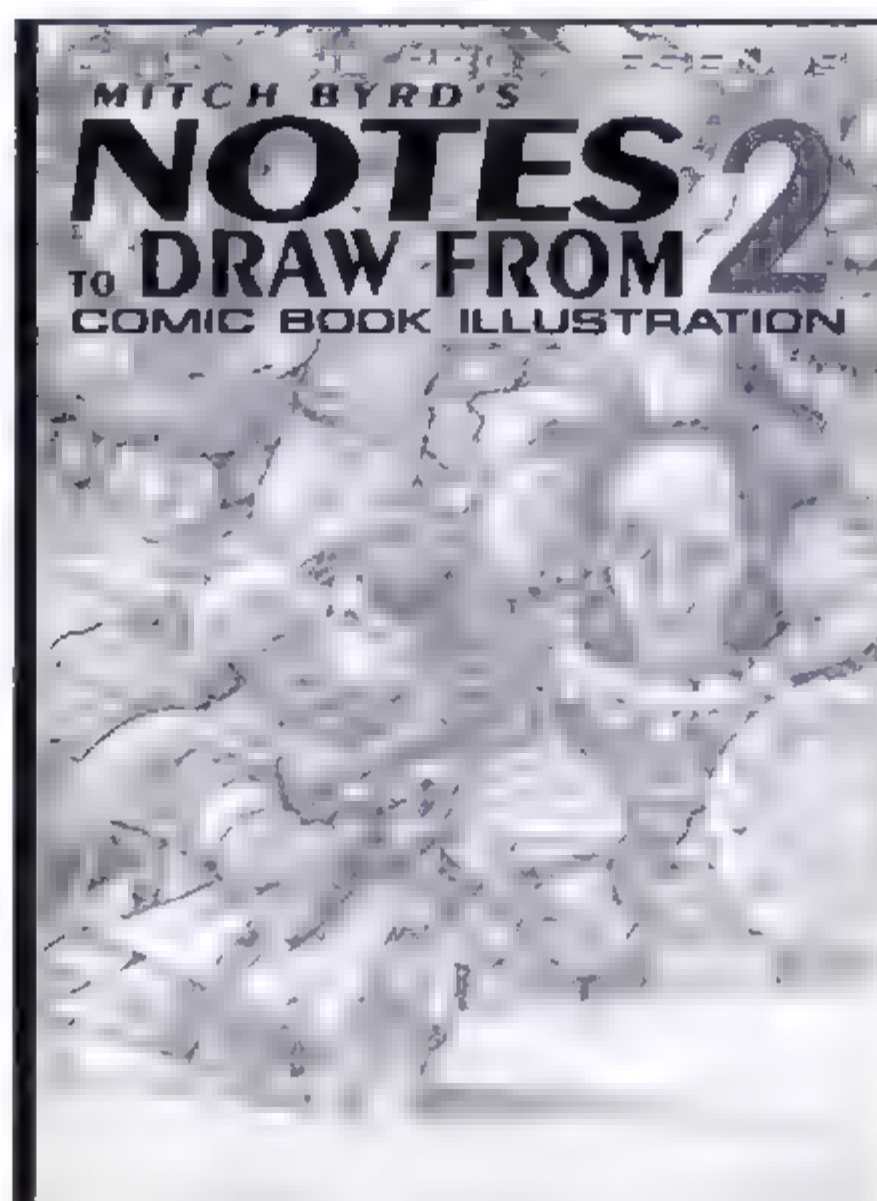


# Blue Line Art



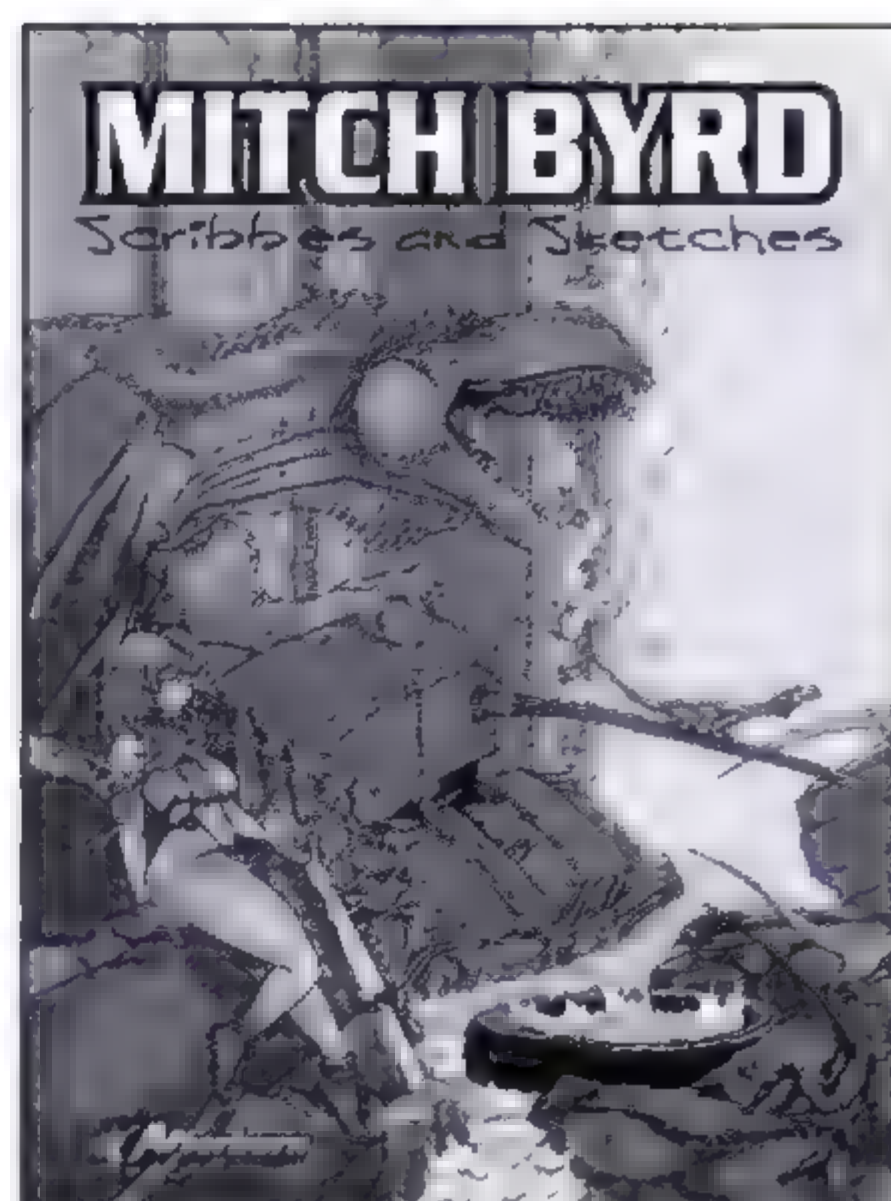
## NOTES TO DRAW FROM COMIC BOOK ILLUSTRATION

By Mitch Byrd  
104 pg / Black and white w/ full color cover  
ITEM# BL3010 / SRP \$19.99



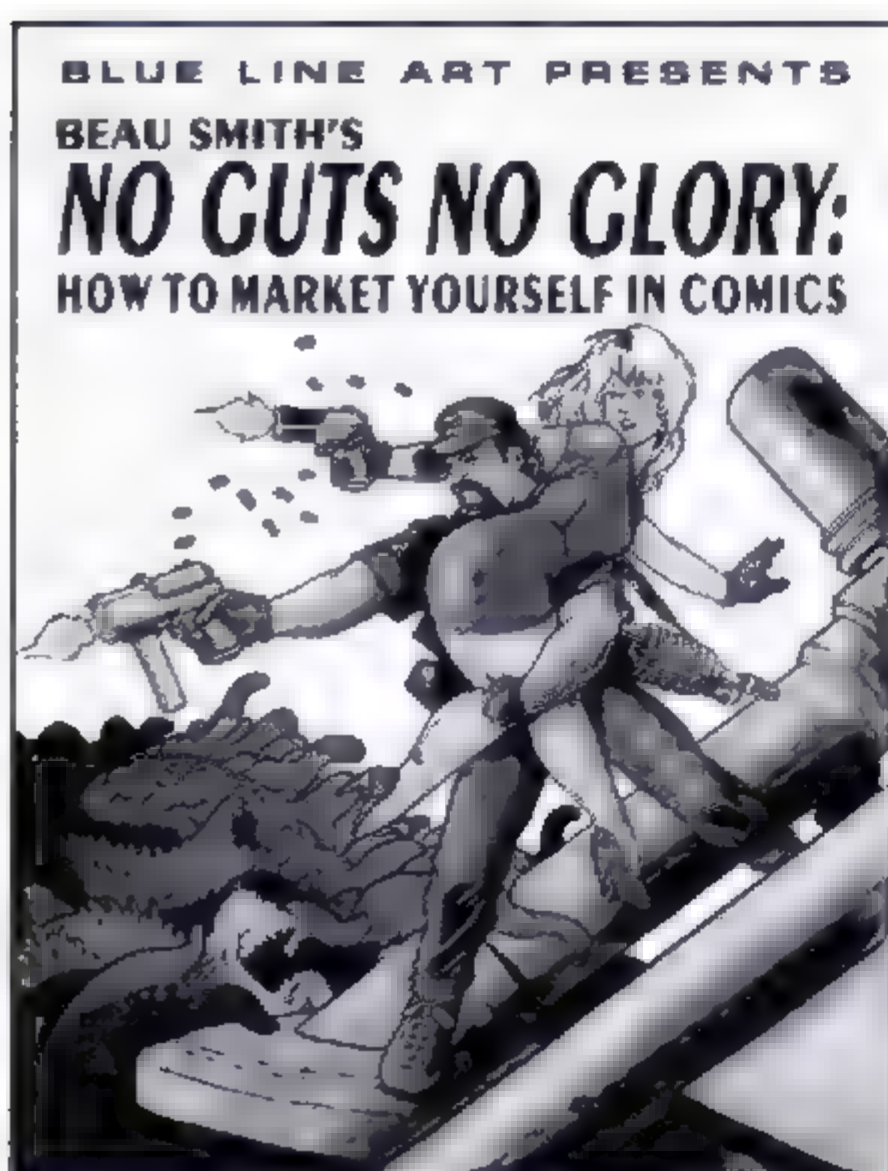
## NOTES TO DRAW FROM 2 COMIC BOOK ILLUSTRATION

By Mitch Byrd  
104 pg / Black and white w/ full color cover  
ITEM# BL3011 / SRP \$19.99

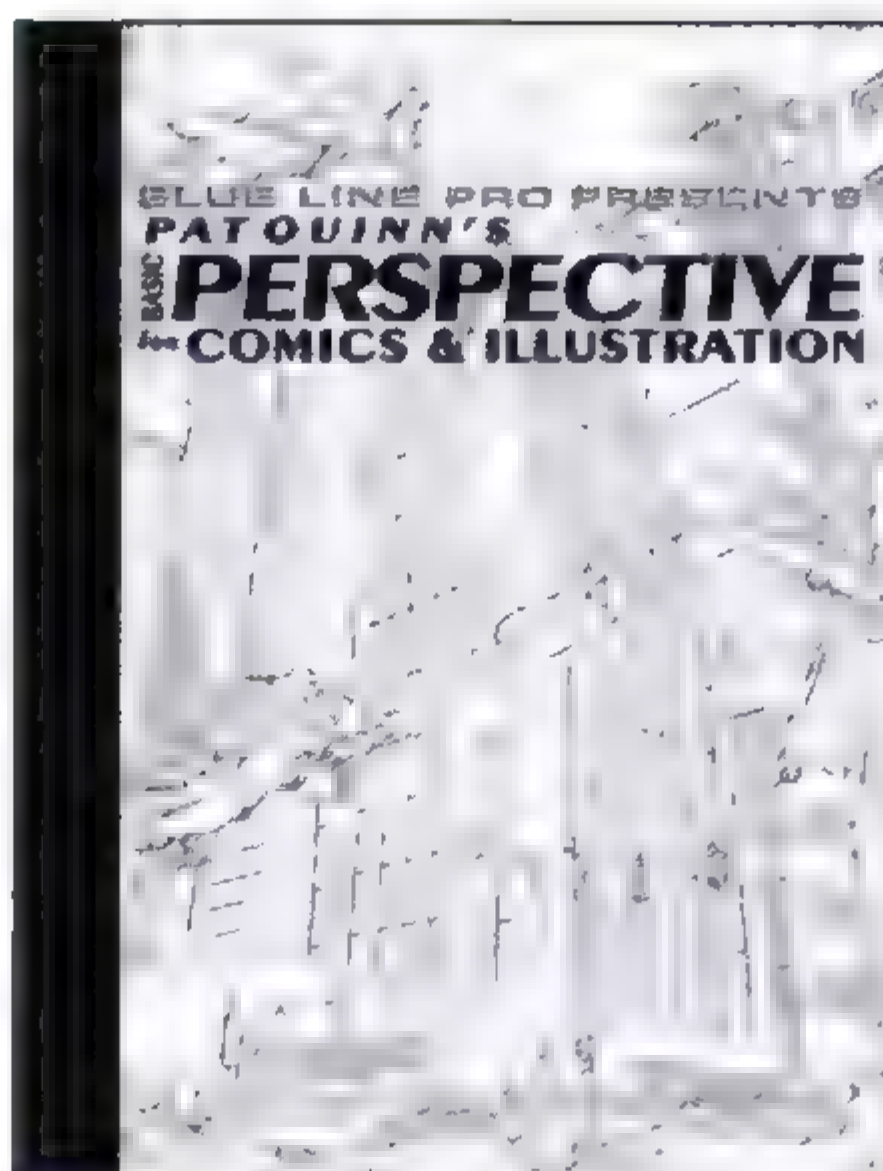


## MITCH BYRD SCRIBBLES AND SKETCHES

by Mitch Byrd  
200 pages / Black and white w/ full color cover  
ITEM#BL3040 / SRP \$19.99



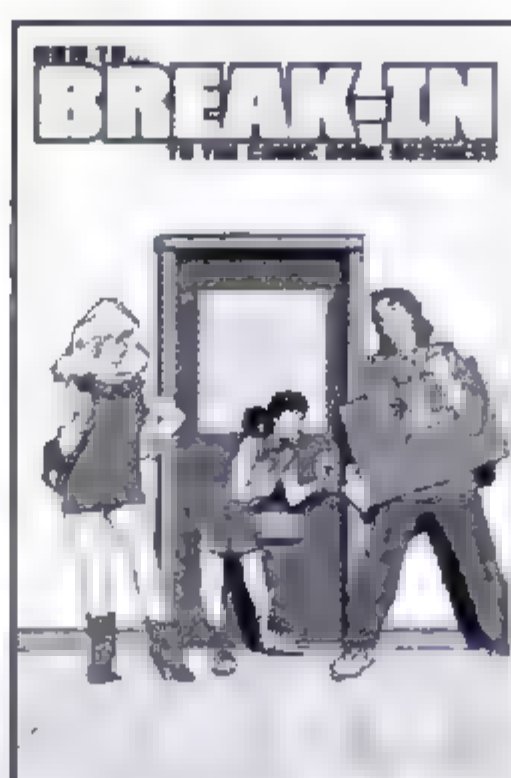
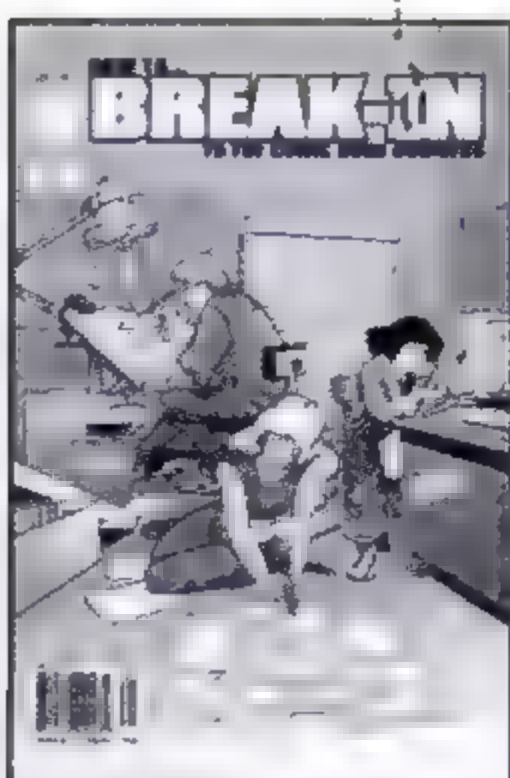
Beau Smith's  
**No Guts, No Glory: How To Market Yourself**  
100+ pages Colored Cover/ B&W, Perfect binding  
ITEM #BL3050 / SRP \$19.99



Pat Quinn's  
**Basic Perspective for Comics & Illustration**  
56 pages / Full Color  
ITEM #BL3020 / SRP \$12.99



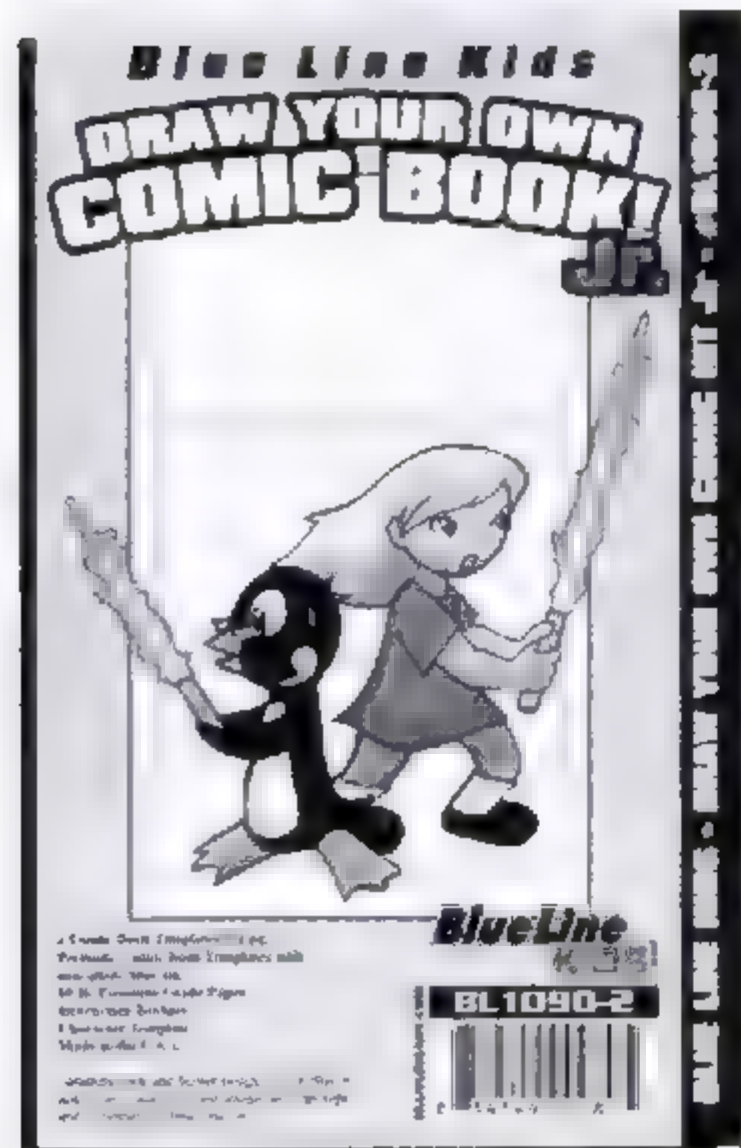
**Best of Sketch Magazine vol. 1**  
100+ pages Colored Cover/ B&W, Perfect binding  
ITEM #SK0001 / SRP \$19.95



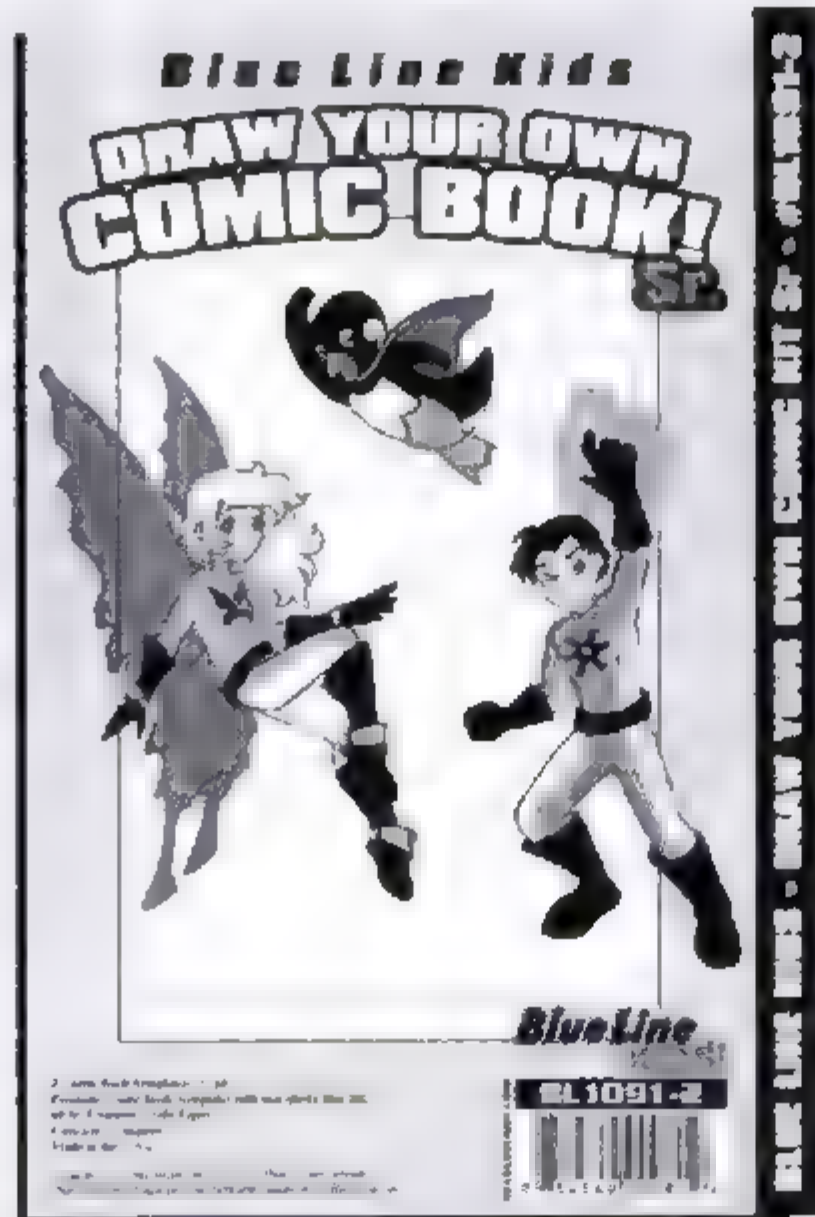
How to...  
**BREAK-IN TO THE COMIC BOOK BUSINESS**  
32 pages / Black and white w/ full color cover  
Issue #1  
ITEM #BL3031 / SRP \$5.95  
Issue #2  
ITEM #BL3032 / SRP \$5.95  
Issue #3  
ITEM #BL3033 / SRP \$5.95



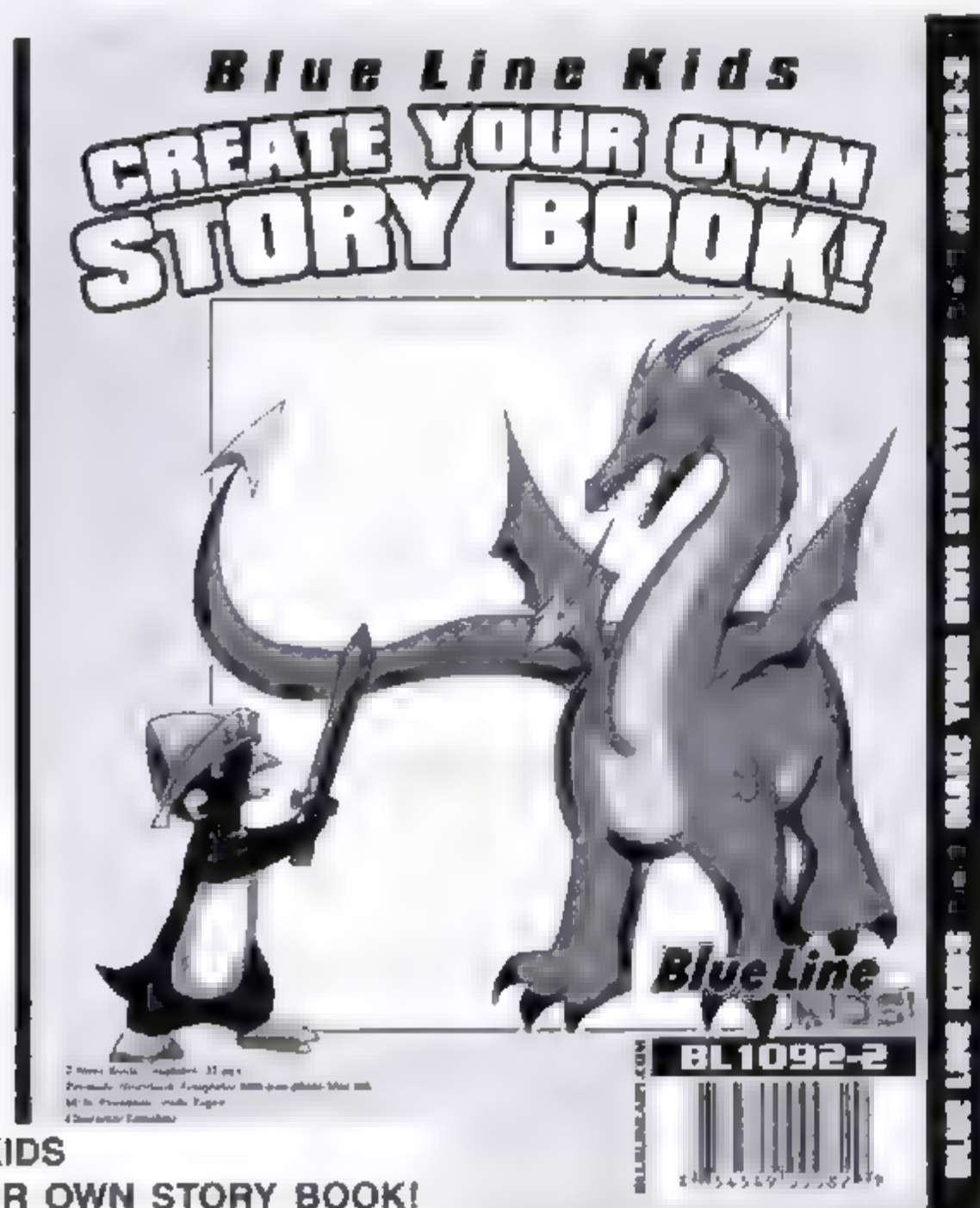
## Blue Line Kids!



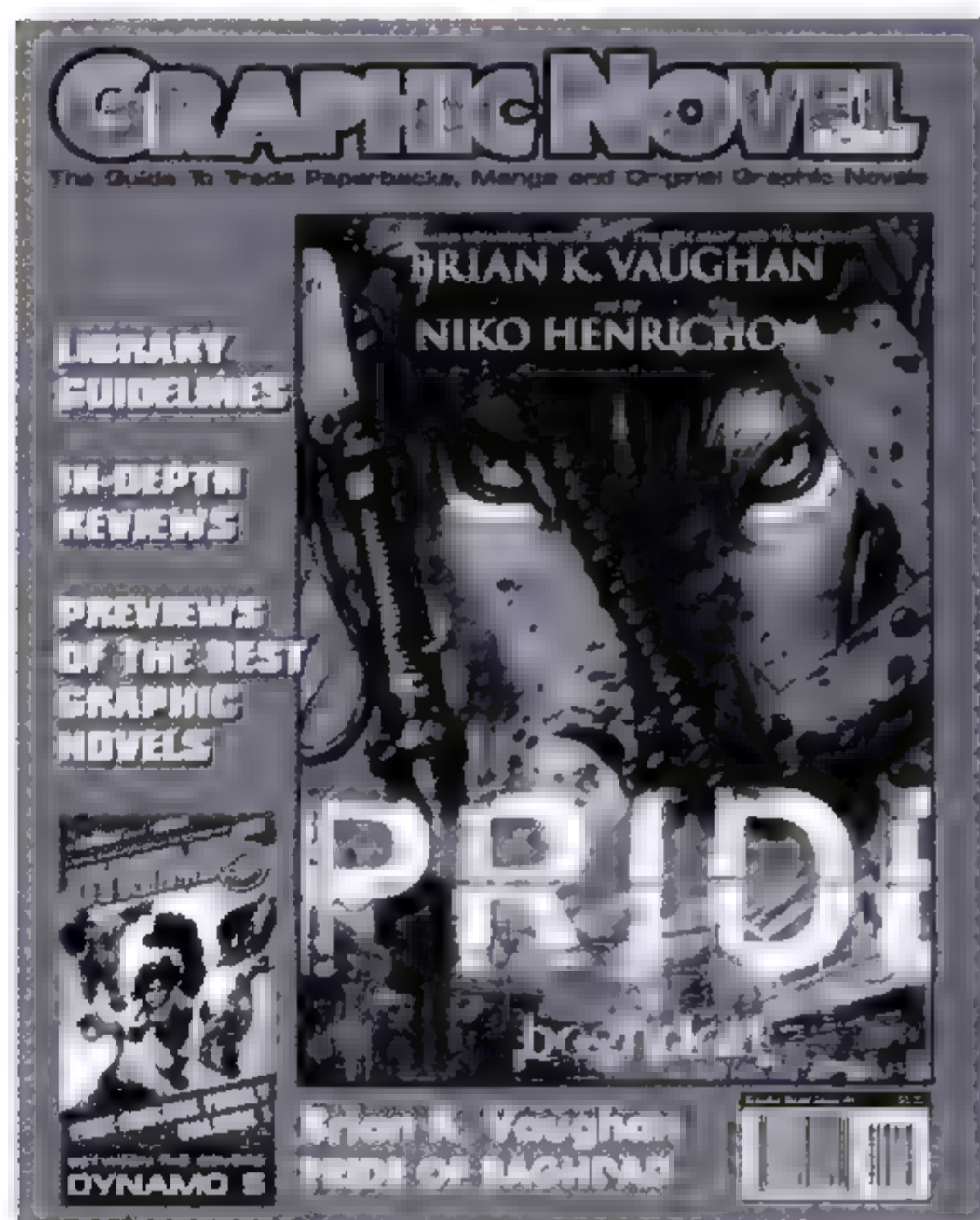
**BLUE LINE KIDS  
DRAW YOUR OWN COMIC KIT Jr.**  
2 - 5" X 8" Comic with printed borders.  
ITEM# BL1090-2 / SRP \$6.95  
DELUXE - ITEM# BL1093-2 / SRP \$14.95



**BLUE LINE KIDS  
DRAW YOUR OWN COMIC KIT Sr.**  
2 - 6 75" X 10 25" Comic with printed borders  
ITEM# BL1091-2 / SRP \$7.95  
DELUXE - ITEM# BL1094-2 / SRP \$15.95



**BLUE LINE KIDS  
CREATE YOUR OWN STORY BOOK!**  
2 - 8" X 10" Books with printed borders  
ITEM# BL1092-2 / SRP \$7.95  
DELUXE - ITEM# BL1095-2 / SRP \$15.95



### GRAPHIC NOVEL SCENE

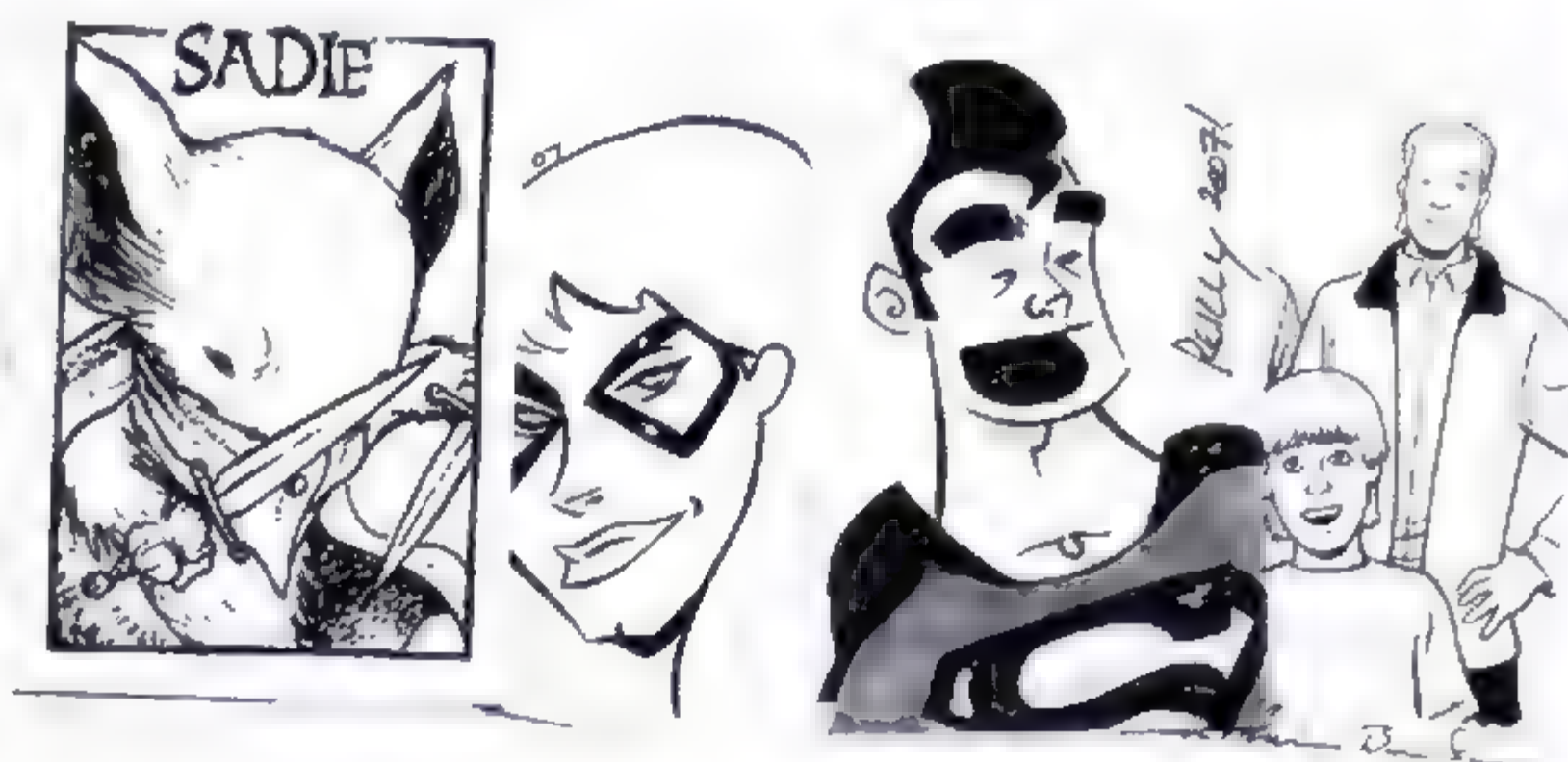
The Guide to Trade Paperbacks, Manga and Original Graphic Novels Graphic novels are the fastest growing segment of the industry and GRAPHIC NOVEL SCENE provides the info that comics readers want to know! What's in print? What's it about? Find information valuable to libraries and essential to comic book stores. Including news, reviews, and more. This is the reference that will help readers find the gems they didn't know about!

Keep up with new art products at  
**BLUELINEART.COM**

How-to's, interviews and other cool stuff at  
**SKETCHMAGAZINE.NET**

Reviews, previews and news at  
**GRAPHICNOVELSCENE.COM**





# *Sketch Card Benefit Auction & Gallery Show for the American Cancer Society*

— 2009 —

APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2009

Proceeds goes to AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

All Creators are invited to participate.  
E-mail Jeremy Bell for more information  
at [JeremyB@comics2games.com](mailto:JeremyB@comics2games.com)

Location: Comics 2 Games  
8470 U.S. 42, Florence, KY 41042  
Phone: 859-647-7568

Sponsors:  
Blue Line Art, Comics 2 Games,  
Sketch Magazine, [ComicRelated.com](http://ComicRelated.com),  
[ComicsforCures.com](http://ComicsforCures.com)





# **Khoi Pham**

## **Artist of MIGHTY AVENGERS**

by Jason Baroody

From working on such books as *Marvel 1602: Fantastic Four*, *Marvel Comics Presents*, *X-Factor*, and *Incredible Hercules*, to now being exclusive at Marvel and the series regular artist on *Mighty Avengers*, Khoi Pham has become one of Marvel Comics top artists.

**Jason:** So tell us Khoi, how did you get into comics?

**Khoi:** I'm still not sure myself. I remember getting a portfolio review with Marvel at a convention in 2003, then setting up tables at conventions and showing my work online, and then three years later getting the invite to draw for Marvel. I guess just hanging around the comics scene paid off.



**Jason: Are you a self-taught artist or did you go to school for art?**

**Khoi:** Self-taught. Or rather, self-teaching. I still have a ways to go to get where I want to be.

**Jason: Can you tell us about your art process, what sort of materials do you use?**

**Khoi:** It changes from time to time, but right now I just use a mechanical pencil, a non-photo-copy blue pencil, and a kneaded rubber eraser. I'll sketch in my layouts in pencil, define them as much as a can with the blue pencil, erase, and then finish with the pencil. Not too complicated.

**Jason: Any tips or trick you'd like to share?**

**Khoi:** I suggest getting up early, grabbing your materials, a lapboard, and going to your local library to work. It does wonders. And even if you end up going home after lunch, you'll still be in working mode.

**Jason: When you're drawing pages or sketches are there certain things you hate to draw or certain things you love to draw?**

**Khoi:** I hate to draw the same scene over and over again. I try to change up my shots, so it can be a bit of a headache. I love to draw explosions.

**Jason: Any artists or creators you take inspiration from, who are your influences?**

**Khoi:** I'm inspired by everyone, but I guess the more obvious influences are John Romita, Jr., Art Adams, Travis Charest, Jim Lee, Leinil Yu, Olivier Coipel, Walt Simonson, Steve McNiven .... Seriously, I learn from everyone.



**Jason: How about advice, any words of wisdom for aspiring artists, who might want to break into the business?**

**Khoi:** Well, I'd say figuring out the balance between "I'm not good enough" and "This page is finished." You need to be pretty tough on yourself so that you can improve and be as good as you can

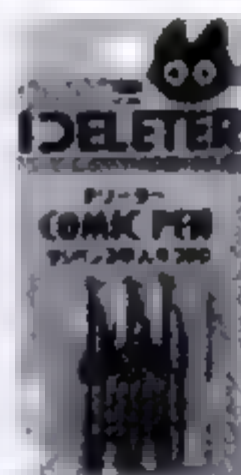
be, but you also need to know when a page or piece is finished and move on to the next. Like, "I'm happy with this for now, but I know I can be better." If that makes any sense.

**Jason: MIGHTY AVENGERS is the book you're pencilling now,**

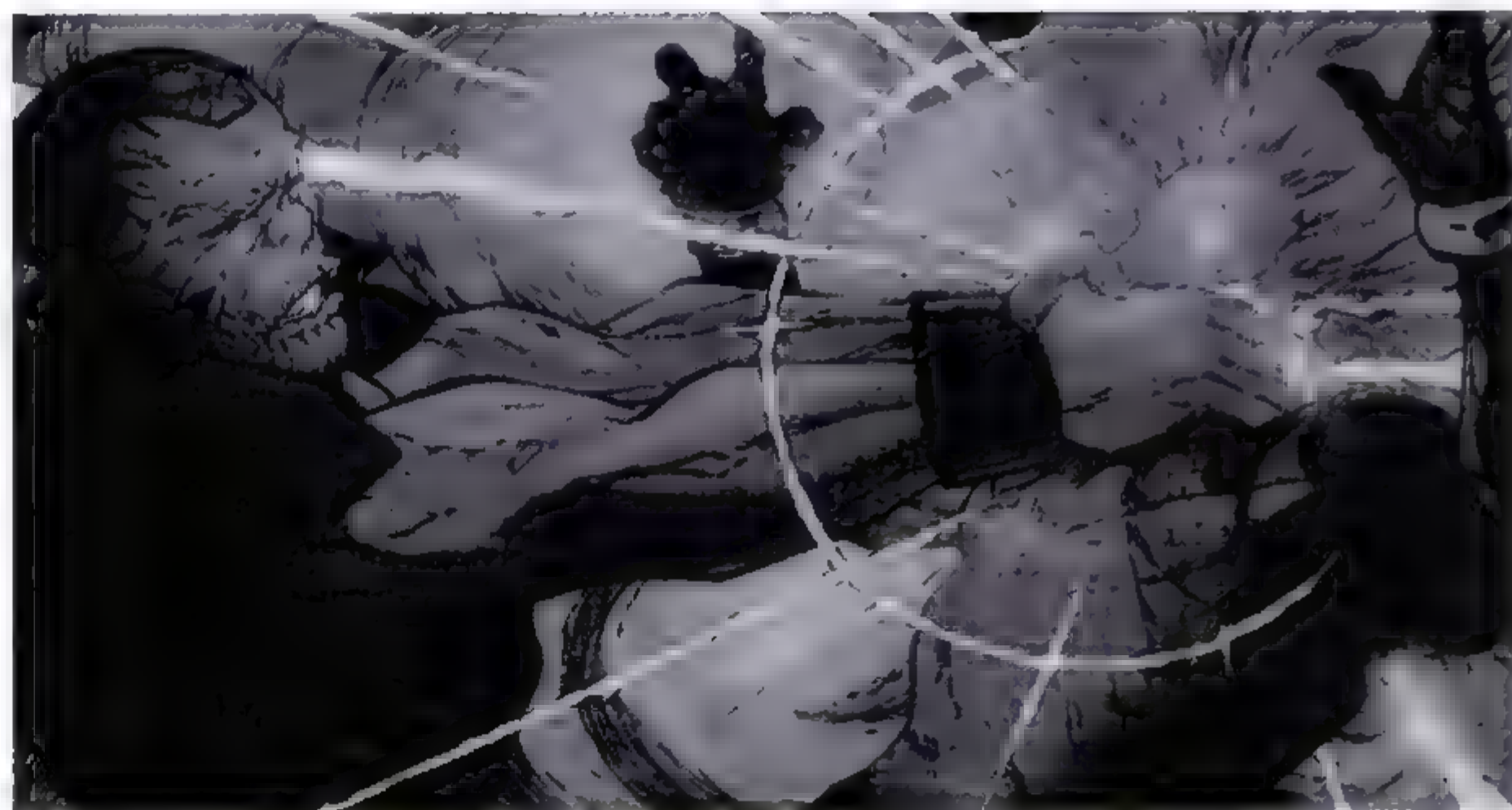


**DELETER  
MARKERS  
INKS  
WHITEOUT  
NIBS  
PAPERS  
and  
SCREEN  
TONES**

**WE HAVE  
IT ALL!**



**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES  
**BLUELINEPRO.COM**



**how do you like these characters?**

**Khoi:** Right now, it's been all Secret Invasion back-stories, so I'm not really working with the actual team yet. Of the books I've done, though, I like the characters. It's fun doing completely unattached stories, but it's also a bit tough having to start brand new with each book.

**Jason:** You've worked with some amazing writers, Peter David, Greg Pak, Fred Van Lente and Brian Bendis to name a few. Any writers out there you want to work with?

**Khoi:** Yeah, I've been pretty spoiled. I want to work with ALL the writers. I'm not picky.

**Jason:** Any books or characters you'd like to take a crack at?

**Khoi:** I think eventually I'd like to do a run on a Spider-Man book. You know, to say that I did.

**Jason:** What's this Ten Ton Studios thing about?

**Khoi:** Ten Ton Studios is a virtual studio where folks can hang out with like-minded comics people. It started out as a more traditional studio between friends trying to break into comics, but it's since grown into a really cool art community. Hell, you're a

founding member, too, so why don't you just tell everybody?

**Jason:** What books are you currently reading or collecting, any recommendations you want to make?

**Khoi:** I'm collecting a whole lot, but not doing much reading. I've got about 6 months of books I need to catch up on. The only books I make time to read these days are Avengers books. I'd recommend buying those. haha.

**Jason:** I just want to say thanks for taking the time to this interview, and give you chance here to plug your work or anything else you'd like the readers to know about.

**Khoi:** You're welcome. Actually, I would like to plug an Image anthology called *Outlaw Territory* that I did a short story for a while back. It came out in October, I think. Check it out.

Outlaw Territory  
Diamond order number:  
AUG082242

Outlaw Territory on Amazon:  
<http://www.amazon.com/Outlaw-Territory-1-Greg-Pak/dp/1607060043>

Khoi Pham can be found at [www.khoipham.com](http://www.khoipham.com) or at [www.tentonstudios.com](http://www.tentonstudios.com) and his artwork can be seen monthly on **MIGHTY AVENGERS** by MARVEL COMICS.

Sketch



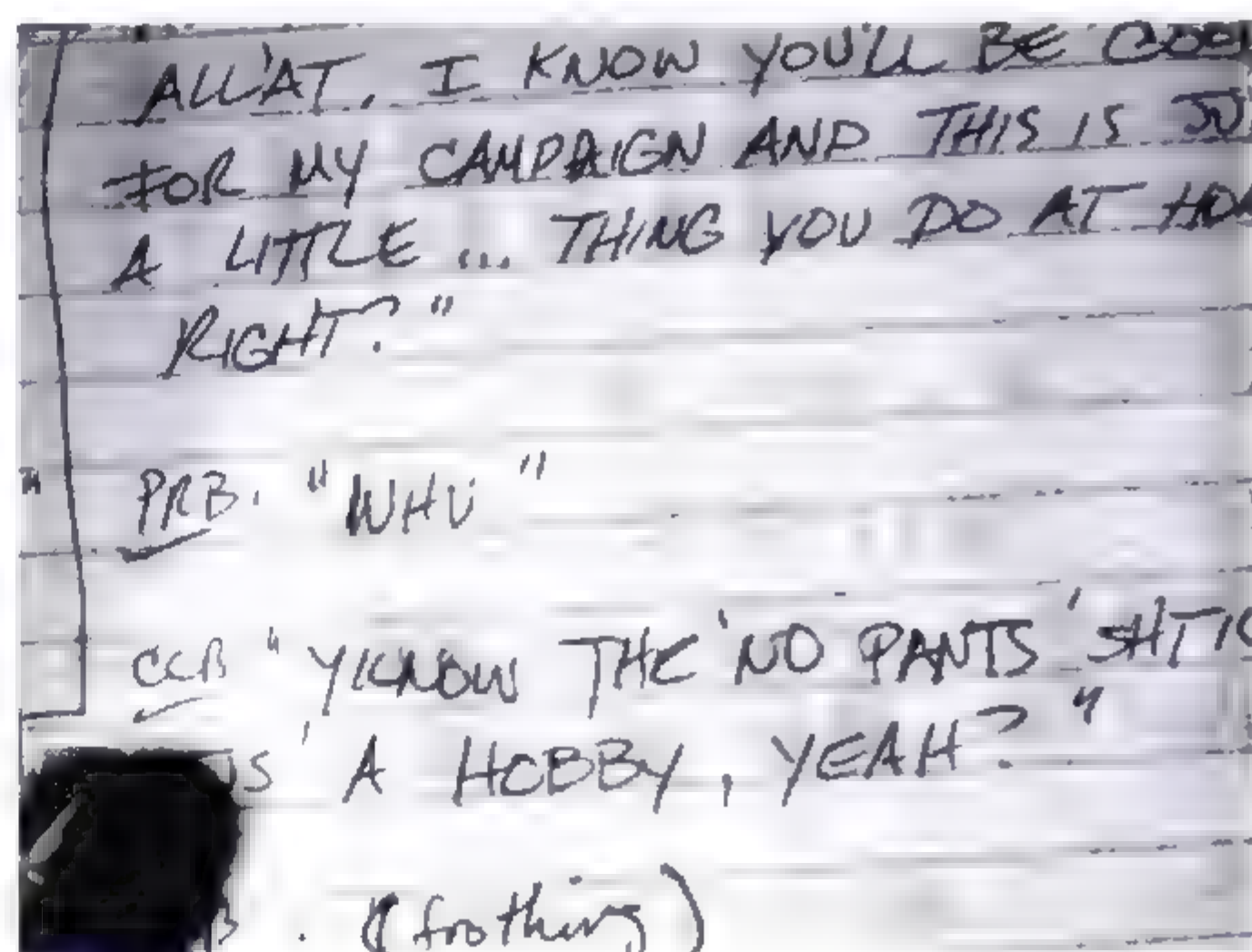
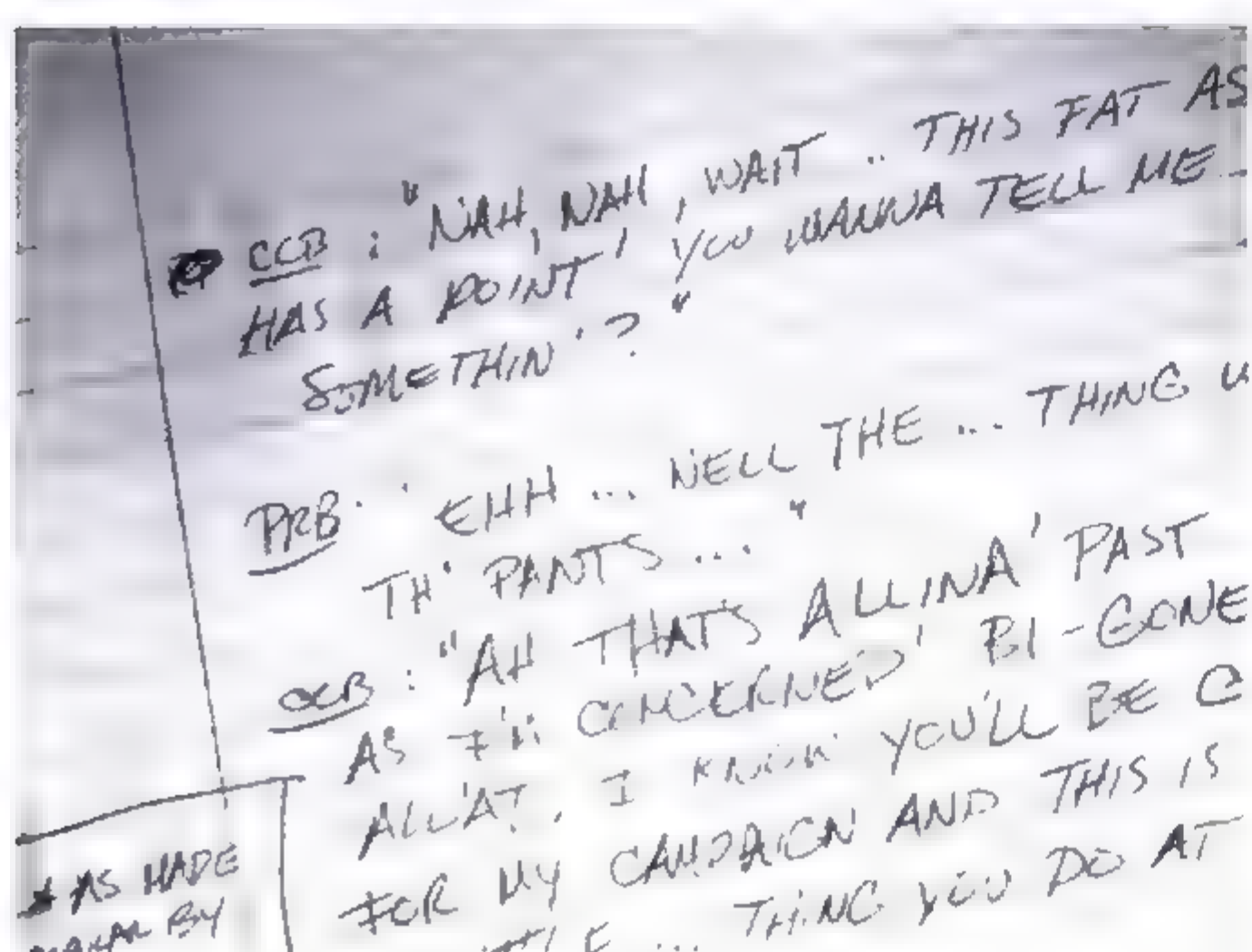
## Drawing

# Drawing Cookie Bear

by Stephanie O'Donnell

The creative process is a wonderful, yet grueling one. With that in mind, grueling yields a rewarding sense. I don't mind racking my brain on how I'm gonna lay out a story with intense dialogue or graphic imagery, because I look at it all as a fun challenge. Do I still get frustrated? Indeed. However, as clichéd as it sounds, art is my passion. I'm not bothered by getting bothered over it in the long run.

Since 2007, I've been chugging along almost non-stop, cranking out collaborations, pinups, and various other artworks for many small press titles. I've just recently been given the opportunity by Free Lunch Comics to work on a title of my very own, "Cookie Bear". The series is an interesting little tale in itself, in its inspirational and artistic origins. What started as a silly sketch before bed became a short comic story within months. Now it is slated for a full comic book size format. There's a first time for everything, and in this case it is **very** true.

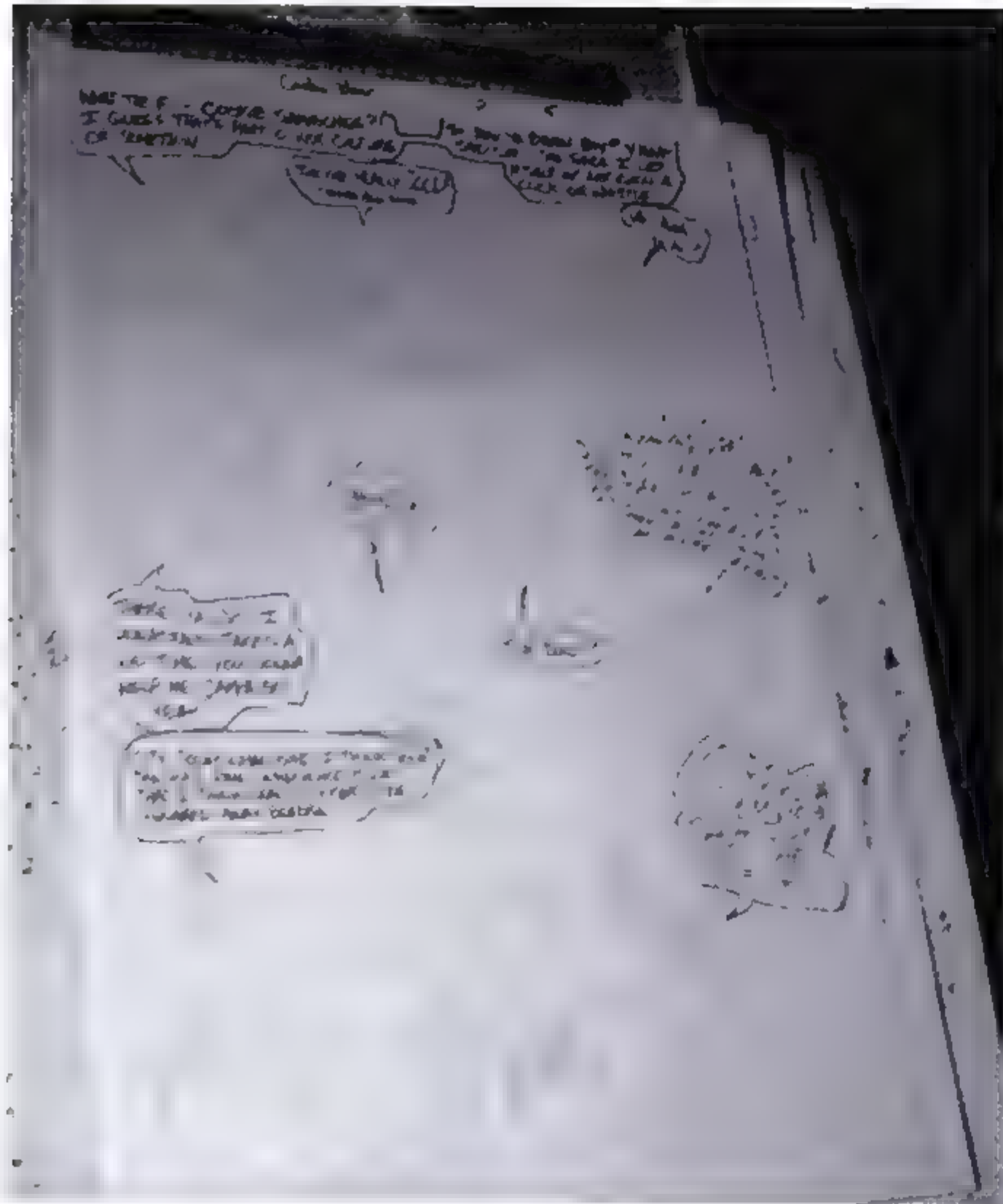


The titular character first came about as a recurring character I'd add in between sketches at the last minute. Over time, I accumulated a good portion of jokes and ideas that would become the first short comic entitled "Cookie Bear and the Secret Family Recipe". It was about 4 pages, done in pencil, ink, and regular 9"x12" sketchpad paper. I did a couple of more stories in a similar format. Soon enough, I figured, "Hey...maybe this can be its own series!"

Now I'm getting that chance, and having my hare brained scheme realized. For issue #1, I more or less compiled what I've done so far, and formatted it in Photoshop for standard 11" x 17" comic book size. For issue #2, which I am currently working on as of this writing, I knew I really wanted to step my game up some more. How do I fill 24 pages with sarcastic birds and bears with crippling food addictions? It helps to have a balance of a flexible schedule, along with a solid plan before anything.

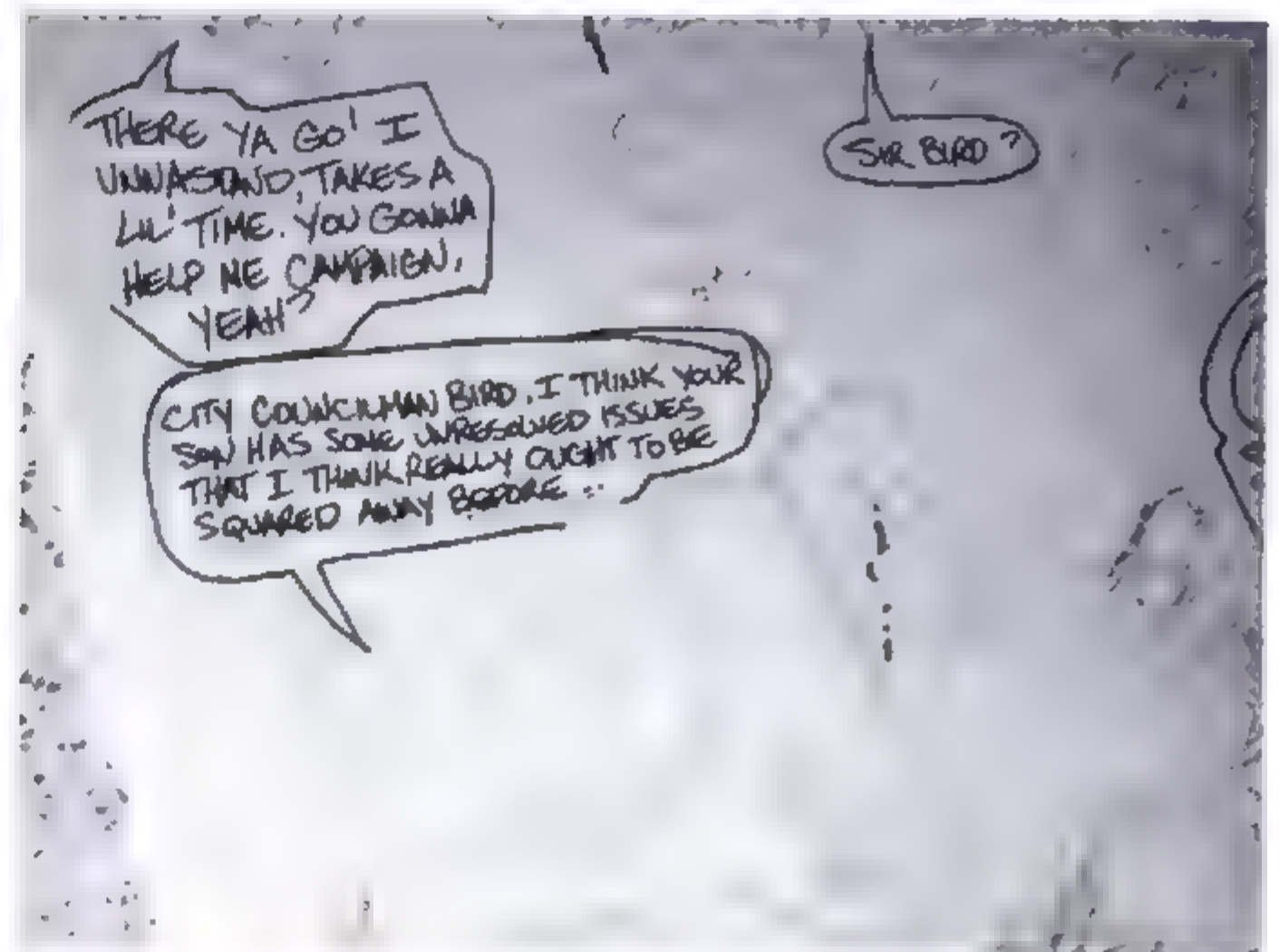
I'm a compulsive writer. I write anything down, on anything that is in front of me. I need Post-Its for my Post-Its, let's leave it at that! Whatever comes to mind that I think might fit into a story (or is just funny on its own) will be documented ASAP. One night, I randomly drew a big obnoxious bird with a tie and cigar, giving someone the third degree. I thought to myself, "Hmmm...he looks like maybe he'd be yelling at his kid...maybe Punk





Rock Bird?" Thus the beginnings of "Cookie Bear and the Awkward Family Reunion" were underway.

The very first "Cookie Bear" story was extremely spontaneous. I had maybe one or two off the cuff sketches that I turned into a four-page story, and



winged the rest. The dialogue was especially improvised. This time, I really wanted to challenge myself and see how I can plan out a bigger and better version of what I initially devised. What I like to do is write out the conversation and certain actions beforehand in a notebook, and break down each part to see where they'd fit on a panel or page. At this stage, and also for creative reasons, I still like to keep it loosey-goosey a little on the layouts somewhat. I'll compare the writing to what I envision being on the blank page to see if it'll work.

Then come the pencils! I like to use a 4H one to sketch in my layouts. Where cartoons are concerned, I usually start with a bit of a rough anatomy build (read: stick figures) and just keep adding on to it. People always tell me "I can't even draw a stick figure!" Here's the thing: you can. To some, it can be very intimidating to even attempt, but if you just break it down little by little, it's frighteningly easy. Just look at it as a stick figure with an upgrade! Build around it, add an angle here, a crease there, a little wrinkle in the center if necessary. Eventually it will add up to a dynamic creation. Don't worry if you feel you need to constantly improve on the product or go through various prototypes. That's how you grow as an artist. It's kinda like being a scientist, but with slightly less freak accidents.

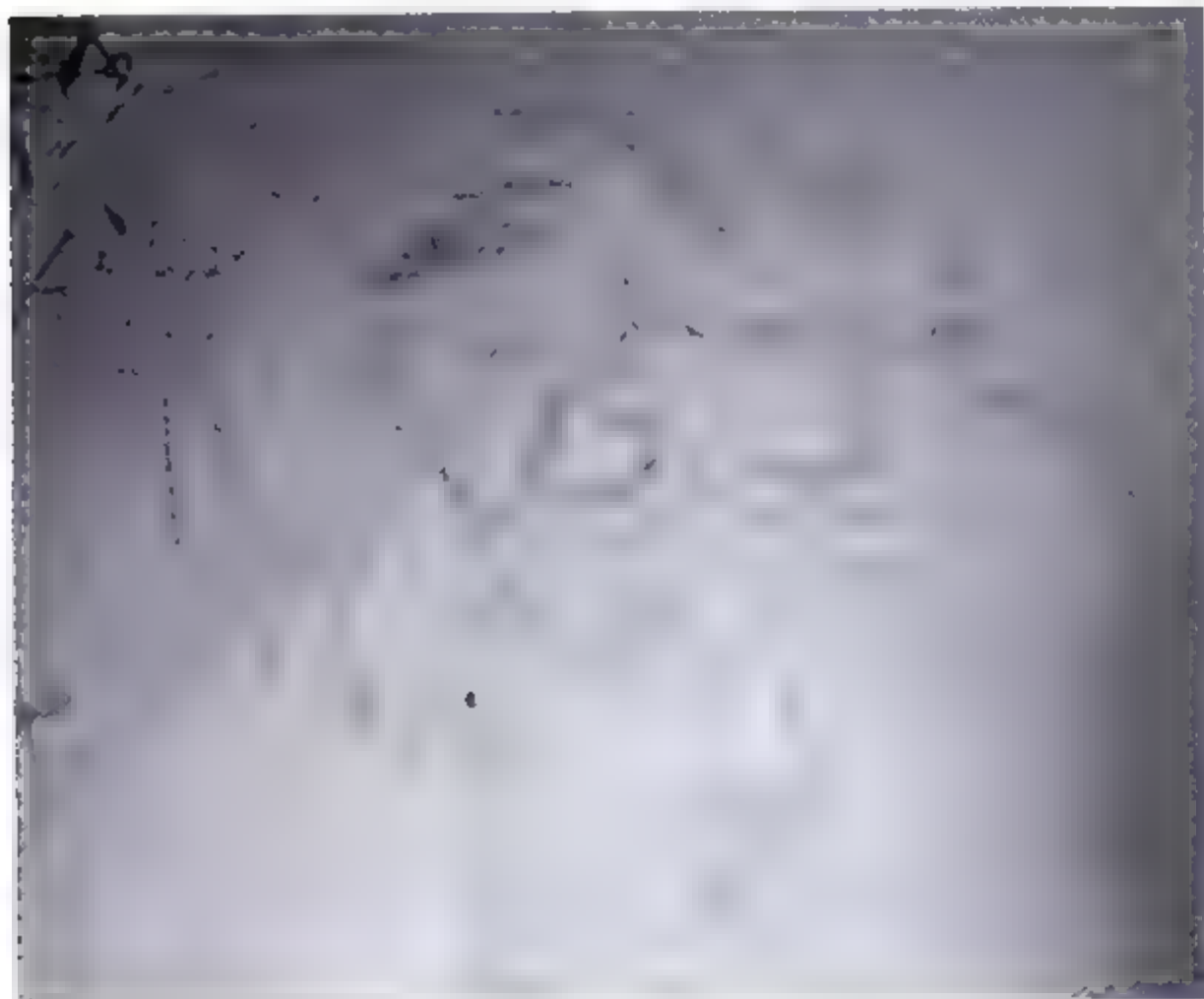
Once I have my stick figures and anatomy gestures situated, that's when I "upgrade". More often than not, I start with the eyes. Then the nose, mouth, facial features/expressions, etc. I start to build around the head and work my way down. When I first started to get back into cartooning after a brief lull period, one of my major problems was character distinguishment. A few times I'd have people tell me that they weren't able to tell my figures apart. For any artist, that's a big time embarrassment! So for lack of a better term, I went back to the drawing board. I kept at it, adding little things along the way that helped evolve my characters (hopefully!) for the better. Sometimes it just takes one simple thing to make a cartoon stand out from another. For example: patterns on a shirt, hairstyles, even giving them an accent. Keep in mind though that your artistic path is always winding and ever changing. It may take time, but you'll get there! There's always room for improvement,





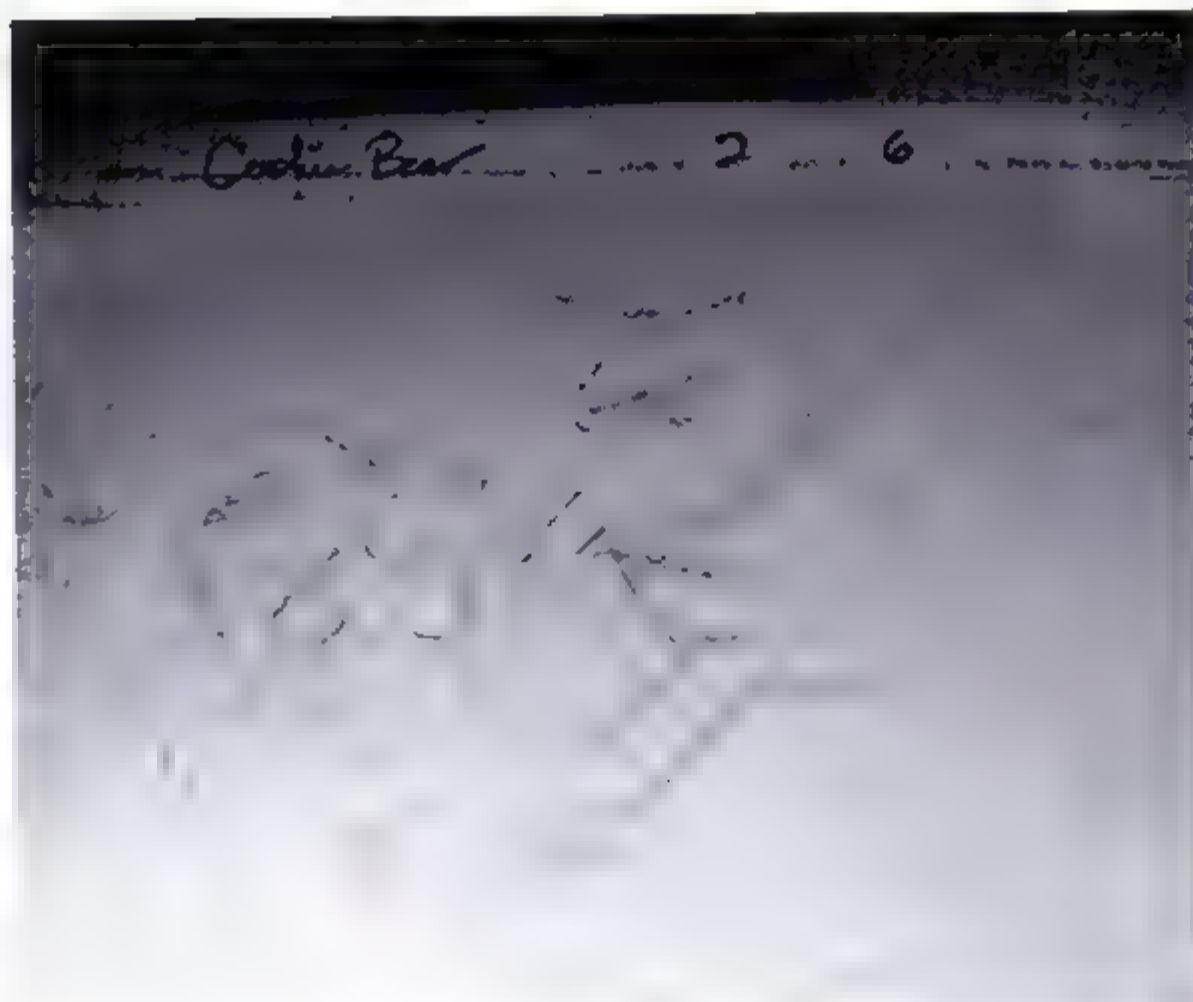
no matter your skill level.

Also, don't be afraid to put in personal touches in your work either. That's what really helps you to stand out. If you think maybe a certain thing might add some flair to what you've got, go for it. Try it out. Try it all out. Play with different ideas. Revisions done twenty times over, tedious as it may be, may often be necessary and beneficial in order to get it like the porridge Goldilocks chose.



You've probably heard this before, but it bears repeating: Sharpies are your friends. They're nice and durable, come in good sizes for various ink jobs, but I find they work best when filling in spots big or small. Sometimes I work with India ink also, but not too often as the setup and cleaning afterwards seem to be more trouble

than it's worth. I like to keep things low maintenance. However, if I want additional texture and/or a certain feel to a piece or panel, I will whip out the brush when needed. Aside from that, my ink arsenal usually consists of Sakura Pigma Micron pens, sizes 5 and 8. I also keep the smaller sized ones on hand for minor



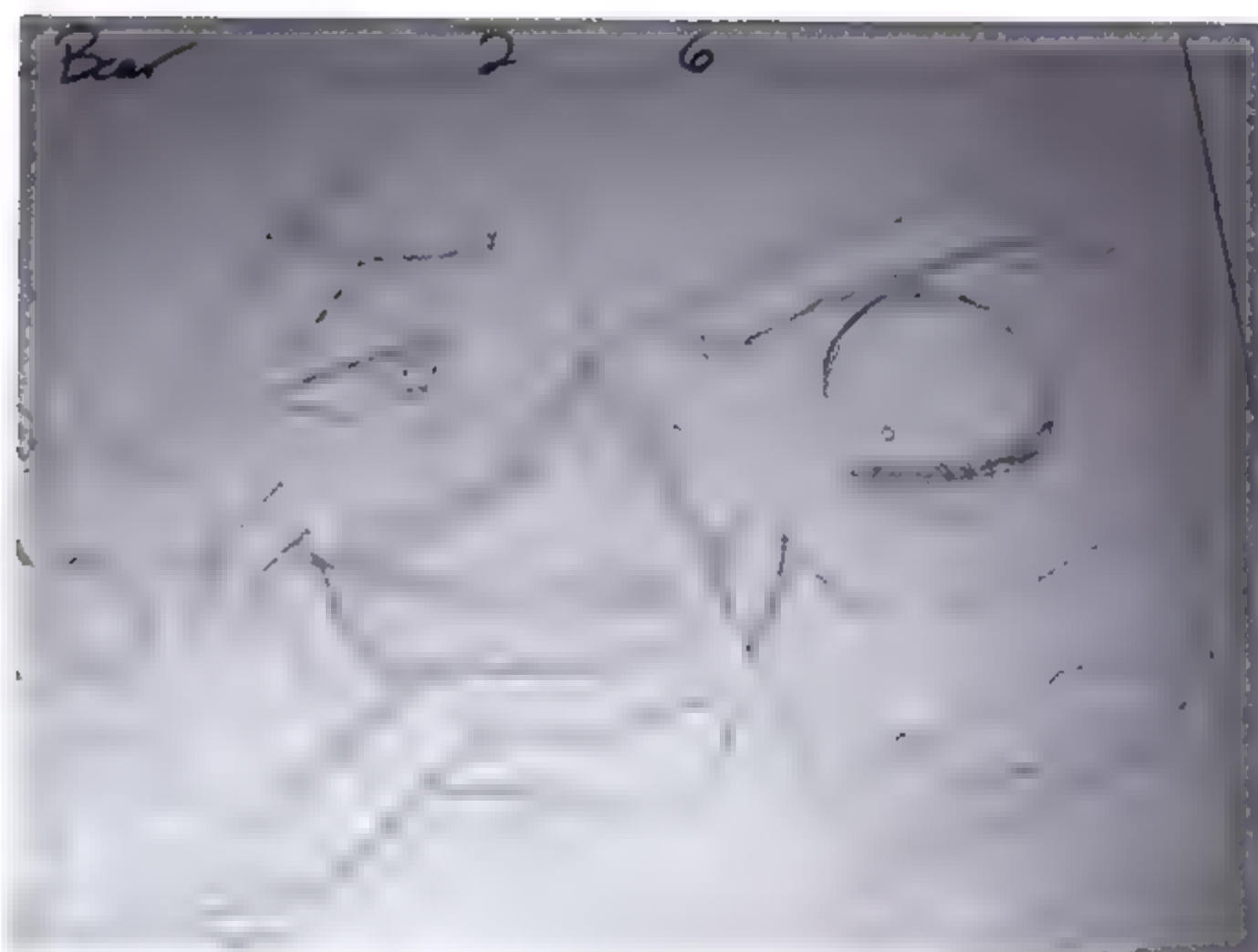
# ERASERS

## EVERYONE MAKES A MISTAKE



**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES  
BLUELINEPRO.COM



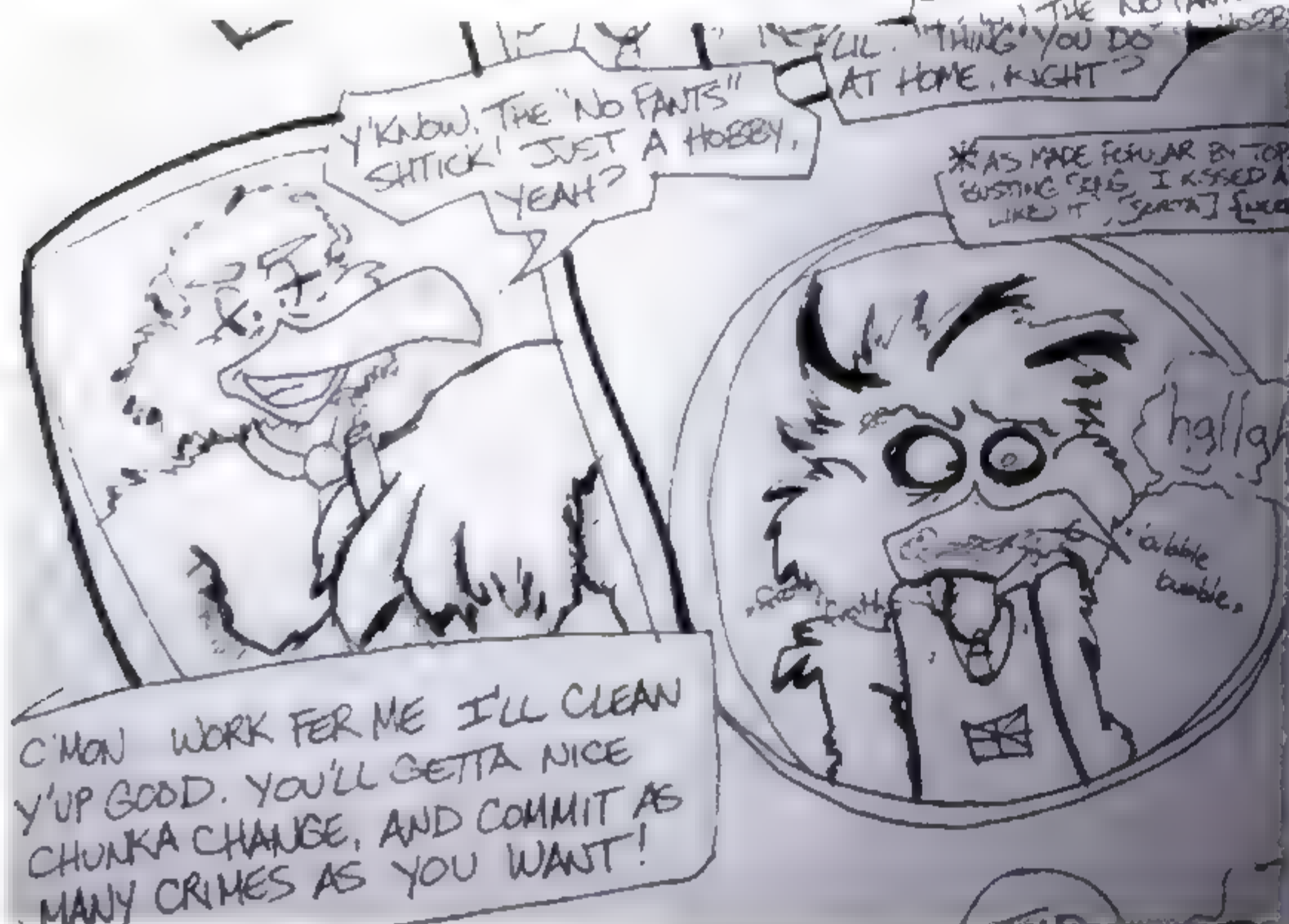
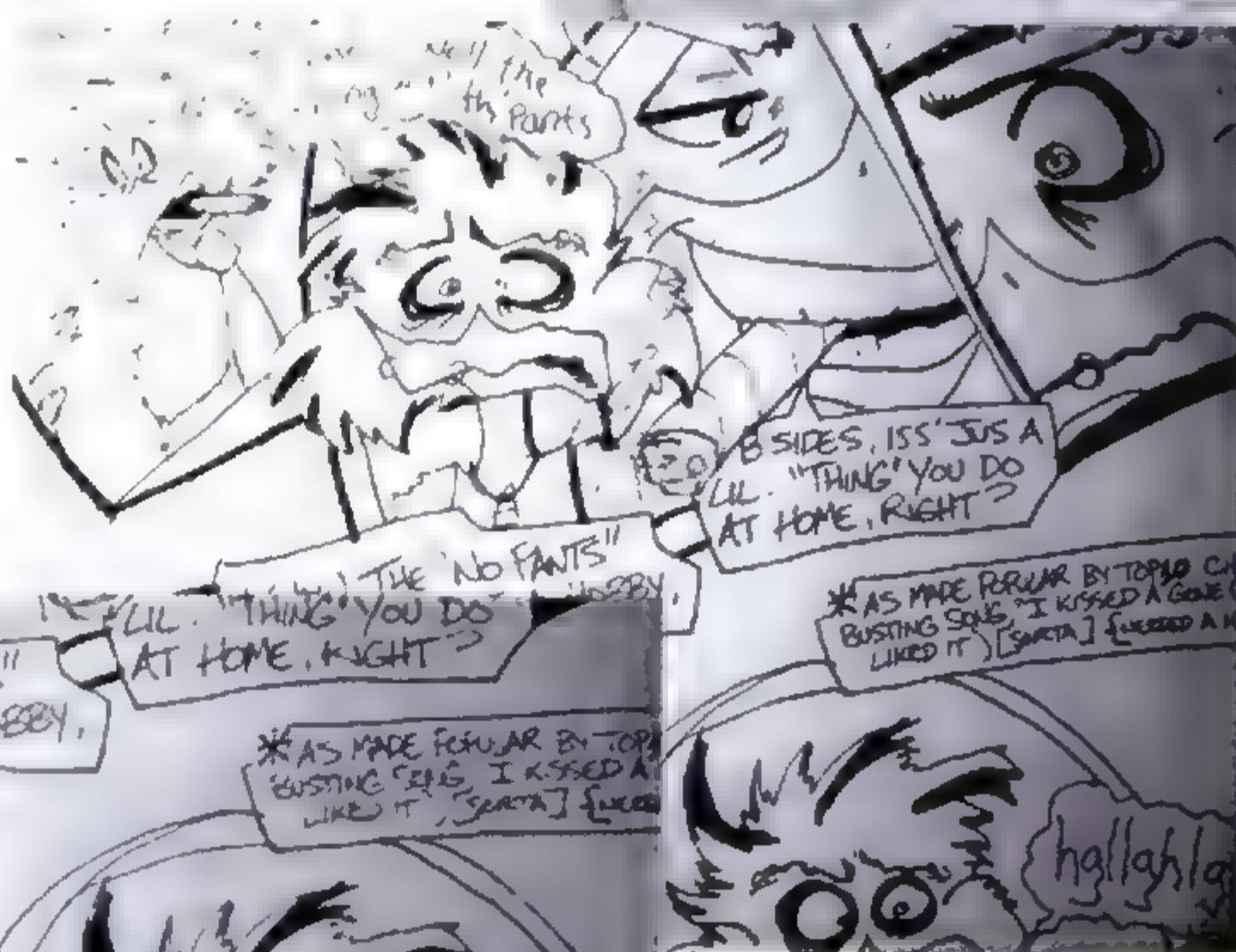


detail work.

My pencil method and ink methods are a bit of a flip-flop in that I like to pencil the action first; lettering comes second. With ink, I work on the words and follow that up with the art. I'll often do what I like to call "initial inks", which is preliminary line art with the Micron pens, usually a size 8 for comic books. Then comes additional layering of inks, shades, and additional textures or cross-hatching. I

work often in black and white format, and am still trying to perfect a suitable modus operandi when it comes to color presentation.

Once I'm content with what's in front of me, I'll scan in the pages and tweak a few things here and



there in Photoshop as necessary. This usually consists of playing with levels, contrast, and/or adding grayscale tones.

Sketch





## Teachers Corner: COMICS IN EDUCATION

by Mike Maydak

### Character Design and Development of Original Ideas

A general subject for many students to draw are well-known established characters from their favorite animated show, comic book, or video game. This activity advances them from being an observer to a participant, beginning development of artistic skills, and serving as a gateway to creative talents.

This tendency can also lead to frustration among educators. After seeing the one thousandth rendering of *Naruto*, a teacher can feel pretty burned out. By only copying, a student misses the very fundamental skills he needs to successfully draw that character. At the same time, this imitation of consumed ideas can be seen as a hindrance to original creative thought.

### The Three-Step Program

It's important to understand that developing the skills and the mindset for creating characters/ideas can be a process. For many it's a normal progression while others need a bit of a nudge. Recognizing where your students are is important in how to encourage their advancement.

#### Step 1: Imitation.

It's natural for beginning artists to draw what they know. Original thought can be very intimidating. With patience and encouragement, the student can build his confidence in his artistic skills by working with these existing characters.

Example: Batman fighting the Joker in Gotham.



### Step 2: Assimilation

After awhile, the student will want to expand his imaginative participation with these characters. No longer is the student merely imitating the character, but creating situations and characters around him.

Example: Batman fighting the Shark Man underwater.

### Step 3: Reinvention

Lastly, the student builds enough confidence to let go of his anchor. Though the archetype may be similar, the character created is original and their own.

Example: Cowman fighting Shark Man on a farm.

### Building Fundamental Skills

As the students progress along these stages, they will have to rely less and less on existing material for references. Seeing a purpose behind it, a new enthusiasm for fundamental drawing skills will arise, making them much more receptive to instruction.

### Character Design Exercise: The Halloween Party

The following is simple exercise to help students move from imitation to assimilation.

First, ask your students to help you come up with a list of highly recognizable characters. Write them down on a piece of paper, giving space between each.

Bugs Bunny  
Mario  
Pikachu  
Darth Vader  
Godzilla

Second, on another piece of paper, do the same, but ask for a list of archetypes and occupations.

Werewolf  
Caveman  
Elvis Impersonator  
Plumber  
Cheerleader

Tear the paper into pieces, separating each name/archetype on it's own piece, yet keeping each list in it's own pile.

Place each list of pieces in it's own container. Have each student blindly pick one piece out of each container.

The student will then have to depict *Character A* dressing up as *Character B*. Whether that be Pikachu dressing up as a Caveman or a Caveman dressing up as Pikachu, that will totally be up to them.

This exercise is a great way to expand the student's creativity with character while allowing them that security of a familiar subject matter. In addition, the students build their recognition skills of iconic elements.

### Big Picture

The creation of original characters from preexisting influences helps student develop the ability to think outside the box. Recognizing what makes a certain idea work and using that for their own application will go along way in making the individual marketable.



# From The Beginning

(Part 2)

by Ron Fortier

## Character Illustration

28 Sept. 2008

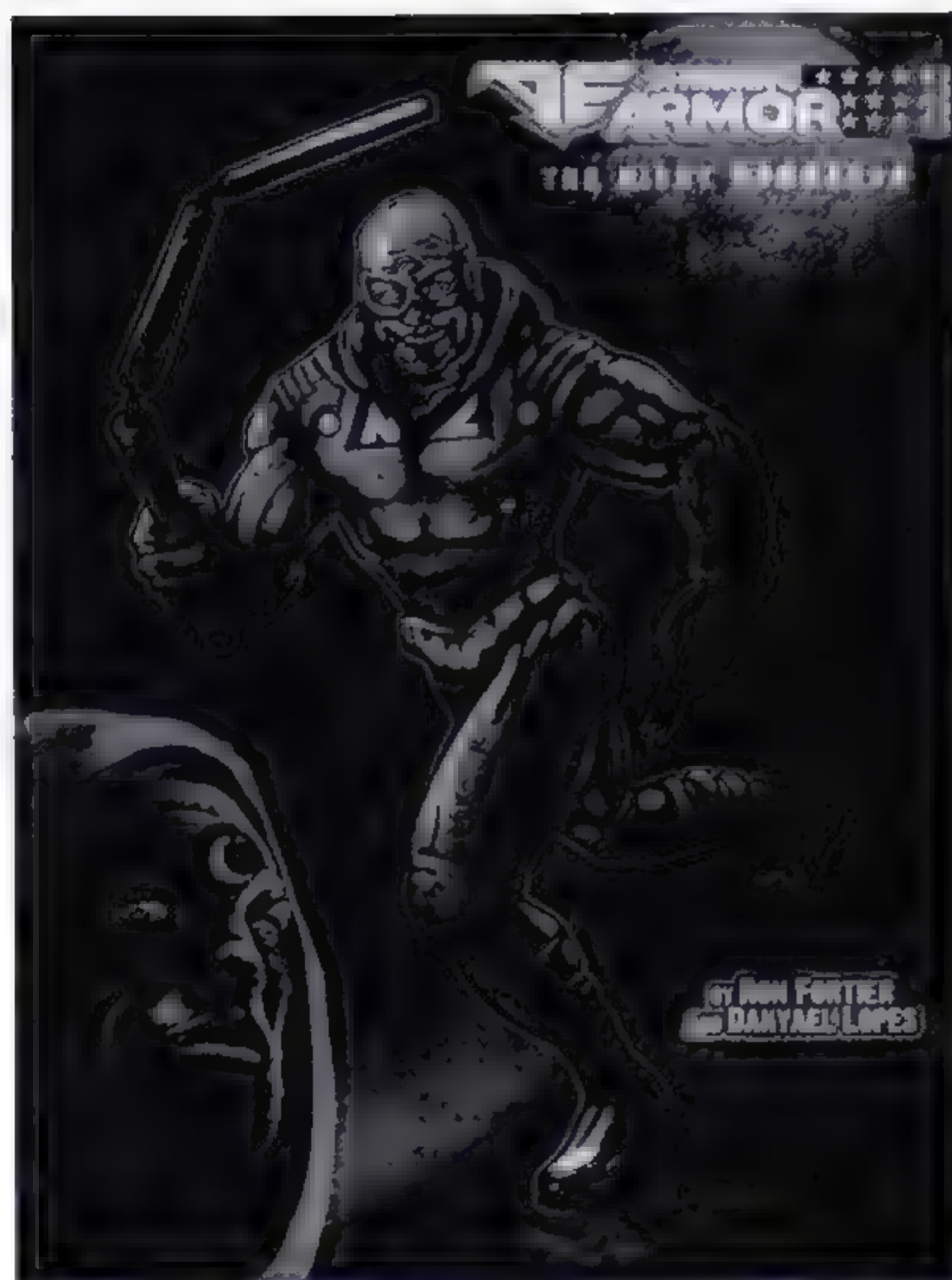
After a few weeks, Danyael completed the other primary character sketches from the proposal and he did them as full color illustrations. He also finished an official logo heading for the series: SHINING ARMOR.

The work is all beautiful, but after looking over each piece, I realized there were two things that had to be reworked.

I specifically described Night Commando as a black man. He does not appear so on this artwork. Whereas in saying our Catholic priest had reached the rank of Bishop, I made the assumption Danyael would draw an older man; perhaps with gray hair or balding.

His depiction here strikes me as too young for the importance he will play in the entire resolution of the story's major problem.

So I've replied thanking Danyael for the great work and asked him to make these changes. Hopefully he will understand and get that done. Once these are set, then it will be back to completing the sequential samples.



## Artists Always Take Shortcuts...Sometimes.

So I asked Danyael Lopes to make changes to two of the character illustrations he turned in. This morning he sends me those changes. And I'm a bit upset and amused at the same time. I had asked him to age the Catholic Bishop and he did this easily enough by graying his hair and adding glasses; a nice touch. Now that totally alters the character to fit the proposal.

In his first illustration of the ghetto hero, Night Commando, Danyael overlooked the man was black and I asked him to correct that mistake. He does this by simply darkening the coloring on the illustration, yet the fellow still has a very predominant Caucasian appearance. Yes, artists for the most part are lazy. Ha. But being fair here, Danyael Lopes makes his living drawing. Any time he spends on this project, which offers no guarantees it will ever be published, he is taking time away from his paying jobs. So, he is not keen on having to redraw anything here.

Unfortunately there is no way around this roadblock. Night Commando is a Negro hero and has to look like one. So I politely wrote Danyael and explained that he really has to redraw this piece and get it right. At the same time, I saw an opportunity for him to make an alteration on the costume itself. I asked him to lose the cape and make the suit more like Marvel's Daredevil. Why? Well, because Night Commando has no super powers, he is simply a skilled martial artist. Now I realize Batman, another normal hero, flourishes a cape, but in all practicality he would not, as it would be too cumbersome and impede his movements in any fight. All of which I explained to Danyael.

How will he respond to all this? I don't really know. If professional, he'll grumble and curse me for a little while, then get the new illustration done. Stay tuned.



## SAMPLE PAGES FOR SHINING ARMOR

Script Ron Fortier

Art Danyael Lopes

### PAGE ONE

#### PANEL ONE

Establishing shot of the White House from above, the sun is shining and it is a beautiful summer day.

CAPTION – 16 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., HOME OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

#### PANEL TWO

Close up a TV monitor with the image of the American President, a gray-haired black man named Ambrose Rawling. This is the viewer in a TV camera. It is in the oval office shooting the President as he sits behind his desk. But all we see in this panel is the monitor and a blue image

Rawling - .. COME TO YOU WITH A MATTER OF GRAVE IMPORTANCE TO OUR AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE AND THE LAWS WHICH GOVERN ALL OF US.

#### PANEL THREE

Now pull back. Point of view behind the camera man looking over his shoulder and the camera at the President seated behind his large, wooden desk. Behind him draped windows that look out over the White House lawns.

Rawling - NO MAN, REGARDLESS OF HIS STATUS, IS BEYOND THE LAW. AMERICAN EAGLE'S REFUSAL TO GIVE HIMSELF UP TO THE PROPER AUTHORITIES...

#### PANEL FOUR

Gunshots are heard coming from outside, and the President turns to look towards the windows as one of his Secret Service bodyguards (a man wearing a dark suit and sunglasses) comes rushing up to the front of the desk, his hand reaching into his pocket for his gun, while his other hand is pressed against the radio-ear plug he is wearing.

Sound FX - BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

Rawling - WHAT THE HELL? WE'RE THOSE GUNSHOTS?

Secret Service  
Man - SECURITY HAS BEEN BREACHED!  
HE'S HERE!

#### PANEL FIVE

Point-of-View looking down at the President and the Secret Service man (now with his gun in his hands) as they look toward out toward windows where more shots are heard.

Sound FX - BLAM! BLAM!

Rawling - WHO?!

### PAGE TWO

#### FULL PAGE PANEL

American Eagle comes crashing the windows, broken pieces of glass flying everywhere, as the President and the Secret Service man both try to dive away from all the debris.

The TV director, shielding his arm over his face, ducks behind the camera-man to be safe. Note – Camera-man keeps filming.

Sound FX - CRASHHH!

Rawling - AGHHH!

Director – IT'S HIM! AMERICAN EAGLE!

### PAGE THREE

#### PANEL ONE

From behind the Camera-Man's head, looking at the TV viewer screen again, this time to see American Eagle is standing atop the desk, now covered with debris, broken glass, pieces of curtain etc. The President is nowhere to be seen. AE is wiping plaster dust and pieces of glass of his arms.

Director  
off camera – KEEP SHOOTING!

Camera-  
Man – CHECK! I GOT HIM.

#### PANEL TWO

Full shot as the Secret Service man, now back on his feet, shoots AE, the bullets just bouncing off. AE looking down at him annoyed.

Sound FX – BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

AE – ARE YOU KIDDING?

#### PANEL THREE

AE drops to the floor while swatting the agent and sending him flying across the room.

Behind him, the President is looking on in horror. Note the President has dust and junk all over his suit too.

Sound FX - SWAT!!

Secret Service  
Man - AGHHHH!

#### PANEL FOUR

Mid shot as the President bravely confronts AE

Rawling – STOP, PLEASE! WHAT IS IT YOU WANT HERE?

AE – OH, I'LL STOP, ALRIGHT, AFTER WE GET SEVERAL THINGS STRAIGHT, MR. PRESIDENT.

Rawling – WHAT?



PANEL FIVE

From behind AE and the President as AE turns to the television cameras and bright lights.

AE - I'M HERE BECAUSE I WANT EVERYONE TO HEAR THIS SO THERE WON'T BE ANY FURTHER MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

Rawling - GO AHEAD, AMERICAN EAGLE, THE FLOOR IS ALL YOURS.

PAGE FOUR

PANEL ONE

Close up of AE as he rips off his mask, while looking at the cameras.

AE - FIRST OF ALL, THERE IS NO MORE AMERICAN EAGLE!

AE - THAT JOKE IS FINISHED AS OF NOW!

PANEL TWO

Front of a big-screen TV with AE (now referred to simply as Miller) as he continues address the world.

Miller - I DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL THAT JERK IN PHILLY. IT WAS AN ACCIDENT.

Miller - BUT SO WHAT?

PANEL THREE

Now show this big-screen TV and dozens more of various sizes, all on a wall in a big department store where civilian shoppers (men, women and children) are all standing in front of the multiple images of Miller...watching.

Miller - THERE IS NOTHING ANYONE CAN DO ABOUT IT. YOU GOT THAT AMERICA? NOTHING!

PANEL FOUR

Full shot of Miller and President as Miller turns and grabbing the President's shirt, picks him up off the floor as if he were a doll.

Rawling - YOU HAVE TO STAND TRIA....AGH!

Miller - ARE YOU DEAF? I JUST SAID I AM NOT GIVING MYSELF UP. AND IF ANYONE TRIES TO STOP ME ...

PANEL FIVE

Miller tosses the President into the other camera reporters.

Miller - ...THEY WILL SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES!

Rawling - AEEEE!

PAGE FIVE

SPLASH PANEL ONE

Miller flies out of the room, through the broken windows up into the sky. Beneath him the U.S Army has arrived, with tanks on the White House Lawn all pointing up at him as he flies off. A general, standing in the back of jeep holding a megaphone over his mouth is telling his troops NOT TO FIRE.

Miller - YOU'VE BEEN WARNED! LEAVE ME ALONE!

Army

General - STAND DOWN! LET HIM GO!

PANEL TWO

Now we go to the back yard of a small house in the suburbs. A ten year old black boy is running outside, pushing open the screen door. His mother is coming up behind him worried. In his hands the boy holds an American Eagle action figure.

CAPTION - ACROSS THE LAND, THE NEWS OF SPREADS.

Sound FX

Door Shutting - SLAM!!

Mother - RAYMOND! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

Boy - HE'S A BIG FAT PHONY! HE KILLED THE COMMANDO!

PANEL THREE

The boy throws the toy down on the ground, tears streaming down his face as his mother comes out the door behind him.

Boy - I HATE HIM! I HATE HIM! SOB!

Mother - OH, BABY...DON'T DO THIS.

PANEL FOUR

Close up of boy's sneaker as he stomps down hard on the action toy and breaks it.

CAPTION - THUS DO HEROES DIE.

Sound FX - CRACK!

Boy - LIAR! I HATE YOU!

+++++

After writing this, I sent it off to Danyael and am once again waiting to see what magic he produces from it. He wrote last week apologizing for the long delay, but he has been very busy with some really good paying gigs. Thus, per my word, I am not pressuring him in the slightest. After thirty five years in this business, I've learned that sometimes a little bit of patience goes a long-long way.

I will continue to keep all of you posted.

Ron Fortier

24 Aug. 2008



# Treat No Publisher As Your Home Base

## Inkblots

by Bob Almond

In SKETCH Magazine #34 I revealed my very own 'origin' and the uphill battle it took to break into the comic biz and fulfill my career dream. I ended the story expressing how within five years I came to realize that the hardest thing in the world was not the breaking INTO this industry, but it would be successfully STAYING there. Allow me to share my personal chapter of this regrettable period.

I entered the scene in 1992 at the tail end of the comic heyday when every title was selling huge numbers and royalty checks were common (I saw three or four myself). As Jim Starlin told me, there was more work available than freelancers available to produce it. Most of my work came from my Marvel editor, Craig Anderson, who was editing the 'cosmic' titles so, besides *Warlock & The Infinity Watch* that I inked semi-regularly for 2+ years, I was able to also pick up other jobs for *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Silver Surfer*, *Cosmic Powers* and *Starmasters* from Craig's office and some side gigs from others.

After my assistant editor Lynaire (Burst) Thompson suggested that I pick up an inking assistant in order to keep up on deadlines and my bud, vet inker Keith Williams gave me some helpful info on the matter, I was able to hire my first background assistant (and present-day sculptor) Andy Wiernicki in '94. But within a year the bottom would fall out and sales would plummet for all publishers leading to massive staff layoffs and businesses going kaput like publishers, distributors, and retailers. The industry was always competitive but as I witnessed my editors like Craig receive their pink slips and numerous titles get cancelled it was suddenly a dog eat dog, survivalist scenario.

Remaining editors were worried about their job status and were more cautious than usual about whom they hired and more frequently they stopped returning messages from freelance talent seeking work. I tried taking the train into Manhattan once a month for several months in order to walk through the now-tense Marvel offices (and sometimes DC) and personally solicit for assignments.

This paid off a couple of times for a handful of pages but often some editors were abrupt in their rejection if not outright rude and cold. I'd almost no connections with the other publishers at that time because I had all my eggs in the Marvel basket. So, even though I periodically shipped mass envelopes with my published inking samples to numerous editors from all the mainstream companies, I had little success with that.

And attending NY conventions didn't help much either. With limited editors in attendance, those that were kept a

distance from the hungry creators. I took on what scraps I could and I had to let Andy go. He tried to push his own pencil art samples, also through mailings and at conventions, but he was well-aware of the harsh reality that the timing of his debut simply sucked.

With less recent, published inkwork to show off I started inking vellum samples to fill my portfolio and display my style versatility. I'd been inking mostly with a pen quill until then but I had started using mostly brush with my work with some quill and markers mixed in. Every time I could acquire photocopies of pencil art I would ink it over a tracing vellum overlay. I hated inking over this surface but paying a blueprint shop to convert pencil copies to bluelines was costly. (this was before I had a computer and was capable of producing my own bluelines to ink.) But from time to time I was able to pick up some work somewhere and be part of that company's talent pool.

In 1995 I was hired at Malibu Comics for a year and a half (mostly inking Kevin West) and even hired my second inking assistant, past art college classmate, and present inking machine Norman Lee. When Malibu collapsed so did my partnership with Norm as he went solo, but with more success than Andy. I found myself picking up scraps at small publishers like London Night Studios and Dreamsmith Studios. Eventually, to get by, I found myself doing inking assists for the pros still getting work like Vince Russell, Michael Avon Oeming (pre-POWERS) and even Norman, but my salvation was Mark McKenna, who regularly had several projects on hand and kindly shared some with me to help pay the bills. I was at my lowest state and, with only a background in fast food restaurant management and inking, considering other avenues of employment, even outside of comics and illustration. Many artists were forced to depart the community and seek work in animation or commercial illustration. But I didn't have those connections or capabilities.

In early '97, after a brief return to Marvel for editor Tim Tuohy on the *STAR TREK:DS9* title, I started getting small solo gigs at Acclaim Comics. Lynaire Thompson was an editor there as well and when assistant editor Alex Glass called me that fall to ink Sal Velluto on *BLOODSHOT* it was a small turnaround for me. Not



only did I produce another nine months of work with Sal but it cemented us into a long term art team. It allowed me to diversify my inking approach even more so with more markers and textural approaches.

Even though things slowed down again after the fall of Acclaim, Sal and I still picked up some small gigs together at Marvel & DC (RESURRECTION MAN, JLA, DEATHLOK, BATMAN) and I picked up a few on my own like Marvel's SLINGERS, and DECOY which opened the door for me at Penny-Farthing Press. By the time BLACK PANTHER was offered to us both in '99 by my SLINGERS editor Ruben Diaz I was able to stop assisting others for income and able to hire Keith Williams' & Bud Larosa's past ink assistant, illustrator Warren Martineck to come aboard and join me on this 3-year ride and beyond. And while there was a brief dry spell after Panther before consecutive assignments lined my calendar again, this would no longer intimidate me like it used to. I learned that there always were and always will be upheavals in the biz and from my experience I had bridged the gap to the other side, adapted much, and survived.

As the saying goes "whatever doesn't kill me only makes me stronger".

These are the lessons I learned and will always keep with me:

#### #1-try to stay competitive.

In regards to inking, I continue to try to keep my look relevant and be somewhat savvy with different tools and styles. I've also kept up with the technology. Many letterers and colorists didn't accept the tech in the '90s and were found kicked to the gutters. Besides being able to follow-up for work via email and send digital samples when needed, I have a website for self-promotion. This has allowed me to vastly add to my client list for commissions. I try to keep up with Photoshop and digital coloring, one benefit of which is making up color prints and sketchbooks for sale at shows. I have the printer necessary to

print up blueslines onto board, a factor many editors covet to save on delivery expenses.

#### #2- utilize ongoing networking and name dropping.

This has allowed me to attach myself to projects from familiar editors, associates and friends. Some artists have intentionally paired with me in my career in short term spans (Tom Grindberg, Kevin West, Mike Lilly) and long term ones (Sal Velluto). And attending some large conventions to hobnob doesn't hurt.

#### #3- treat no publisher as your home base.

There used to be some house loyalty in the past but the 90s taught me the folly of having all your eggs in one basket. Don't ever get too comfortable in any one venue and use every job as a springboard for the next one. Over the years, while editor turnover is an ongoing challenge, I've developed some contacts from mainstream & small press venues, even some commercial ones. This allows me more options. From that last point I often make the following comparison between us comic survivors of the '90s turmoil and those survivors of the great depression from the '20s and '30s. Those citizens carried that traumatic experience with them for the rest of their lives, pinching and putting away every penny and always preparing for the worst. In my opinion, those artists that persevered learned to be more conservative, cautious and frugal and found themselves always prepping for a fail-safe plan just in case.

If you survived that crisis then you will most-likely survive the challenges to come in this field with considerably less stress. Well, for a while anyway. And for those newbies sharing our journey, hopefully I've done my part to make you take another look and re-evaluate your game plan as well.

+jpg

Sketch

# YOU NEED TO START IN BLACK AND WHITE

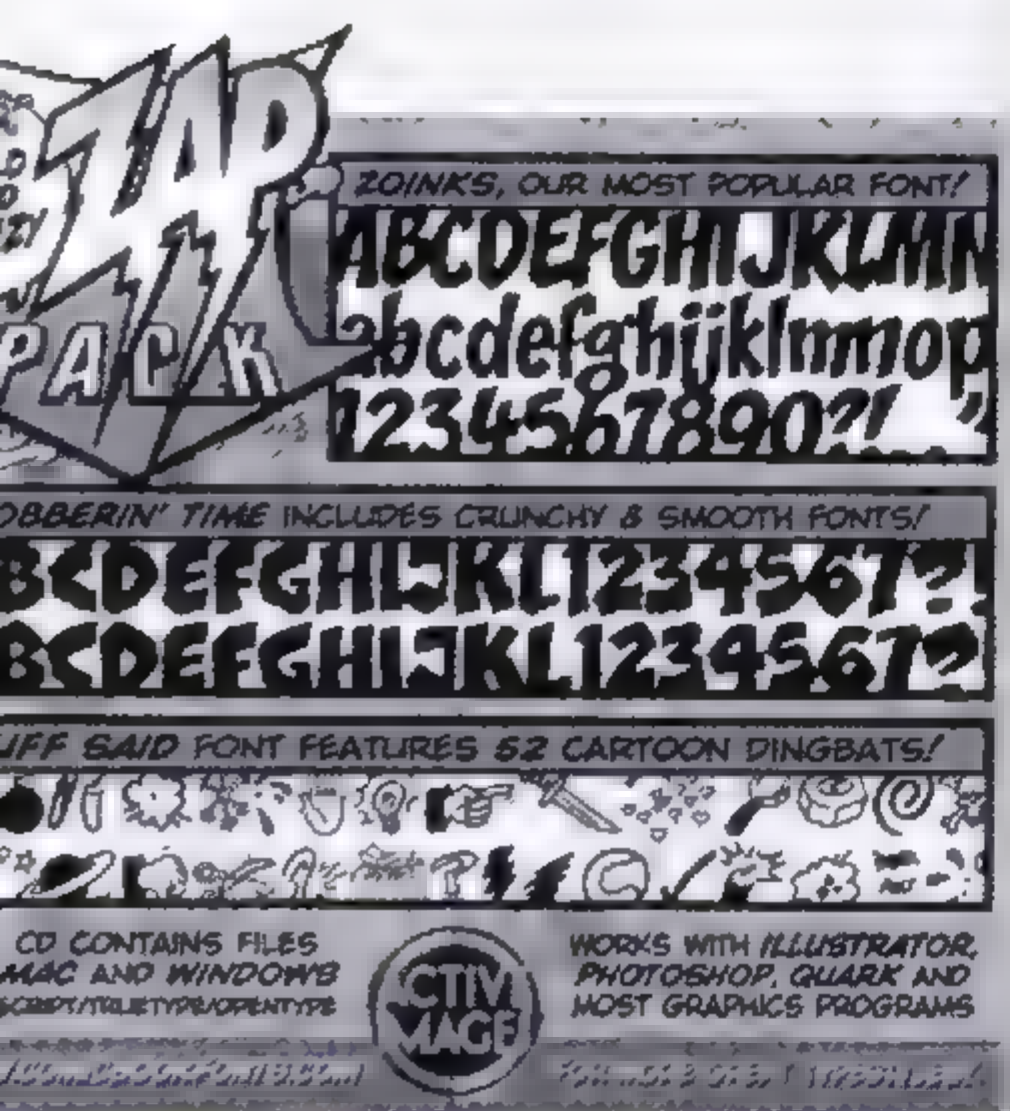
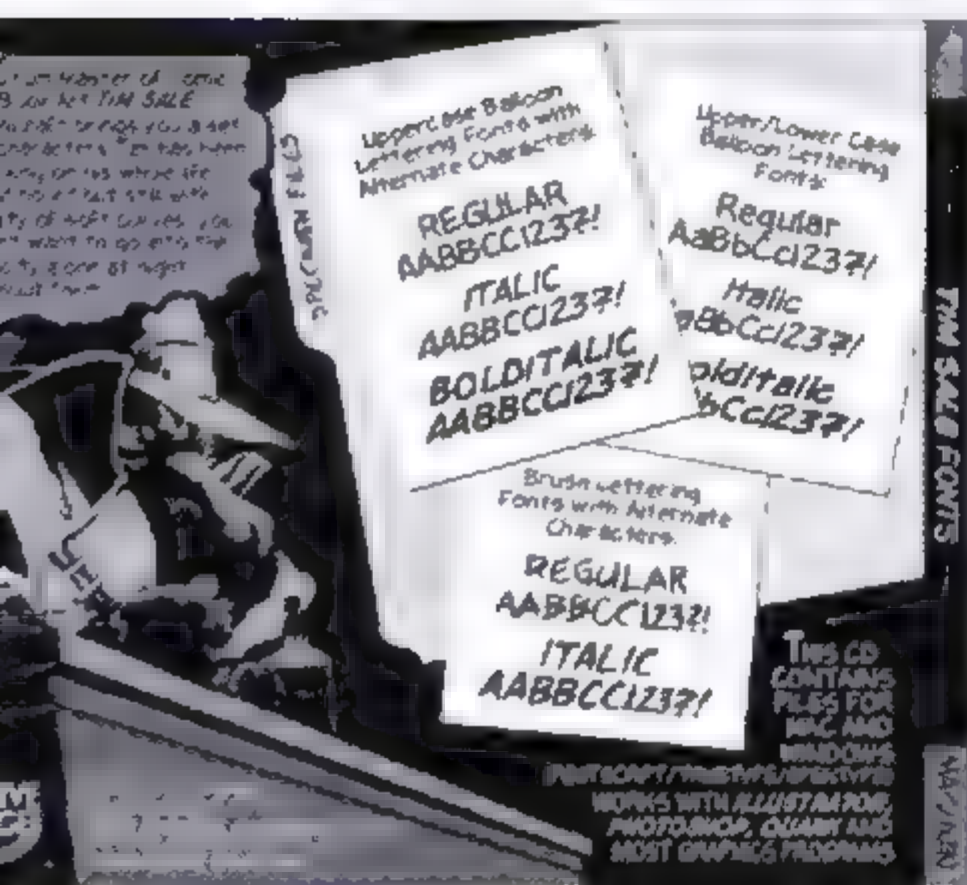
## INKS AND WHITE OUT



**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES  
BLUELINEPRO.COM



# LETTERING FONTS



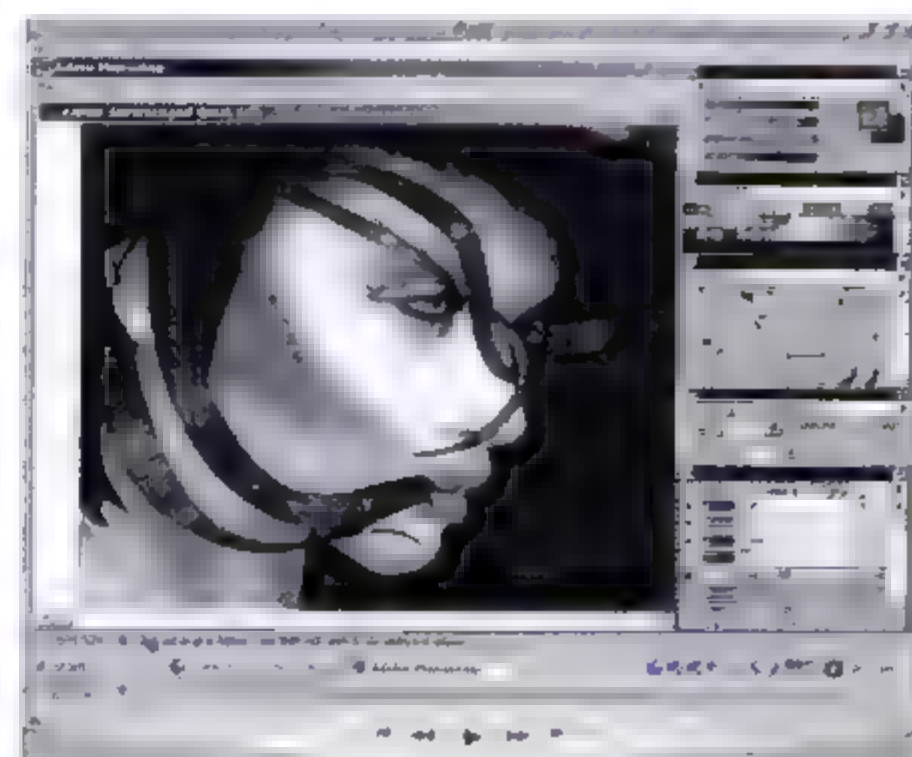
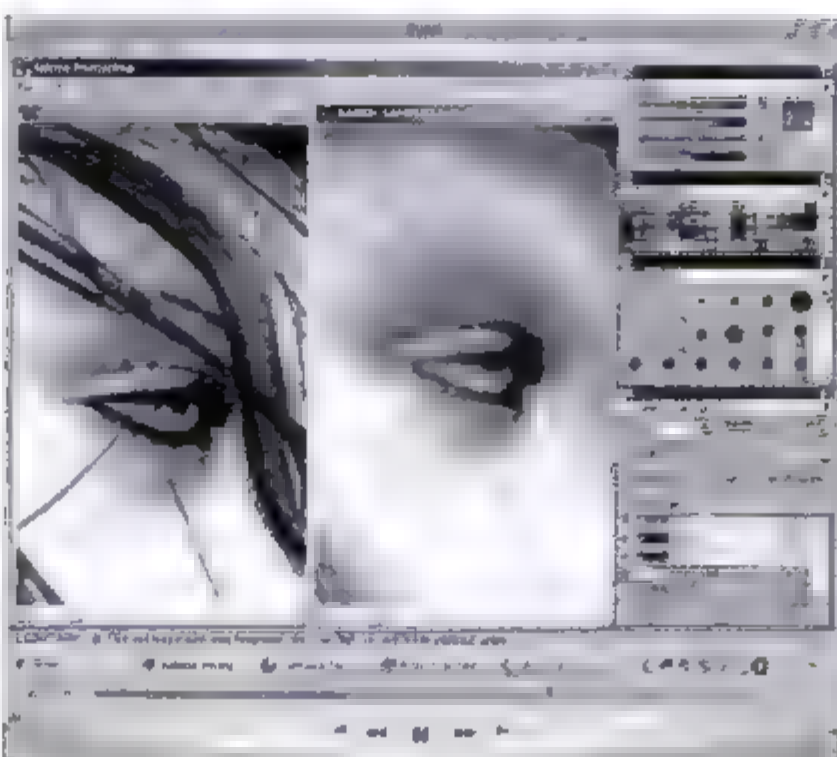
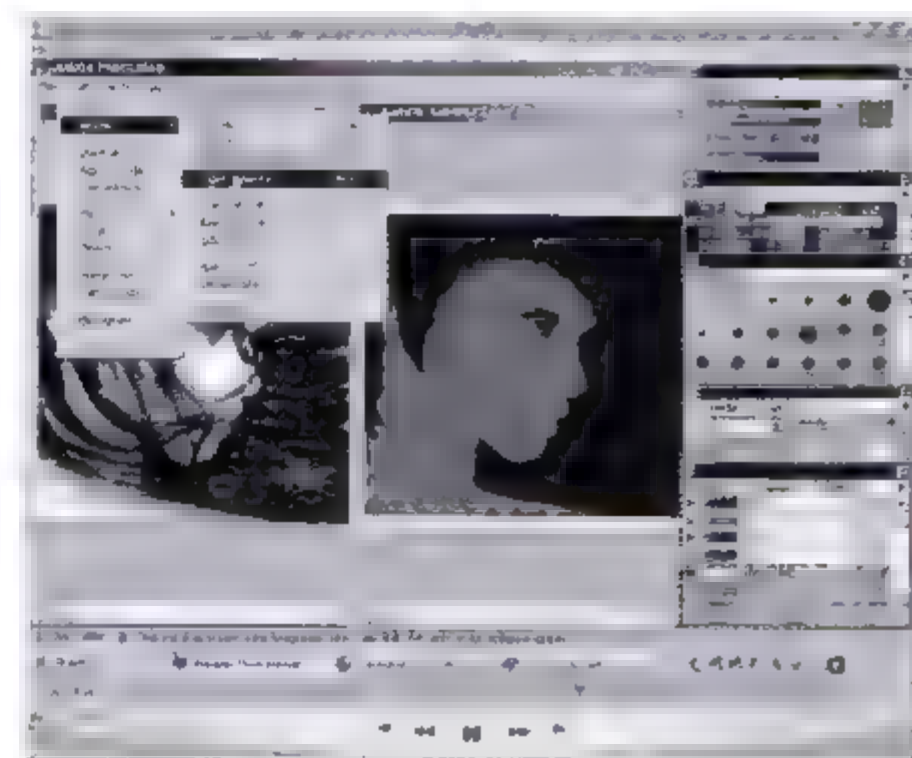
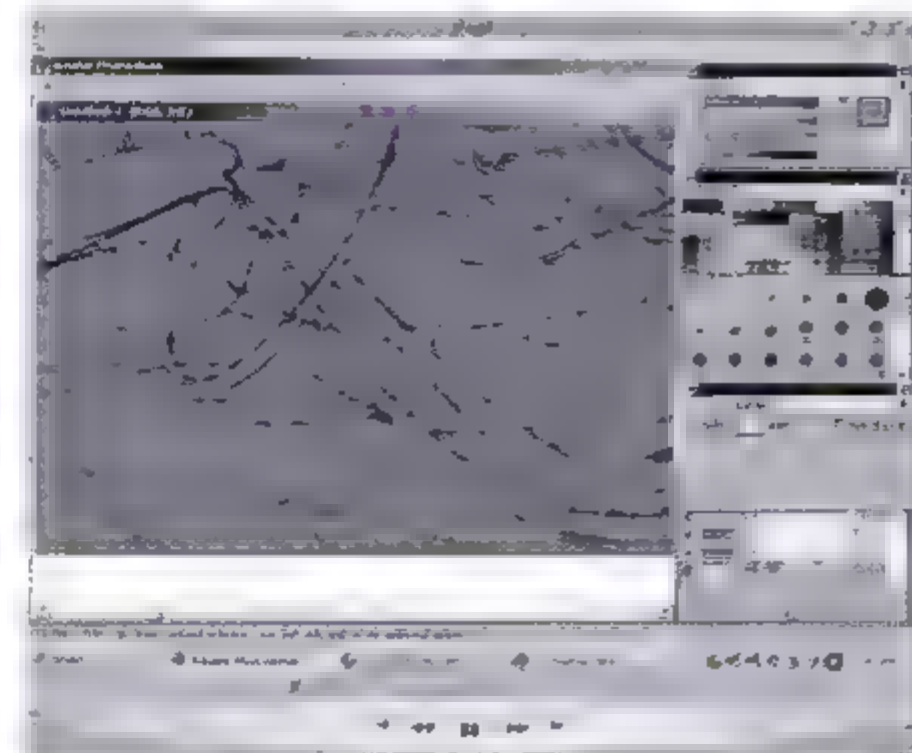
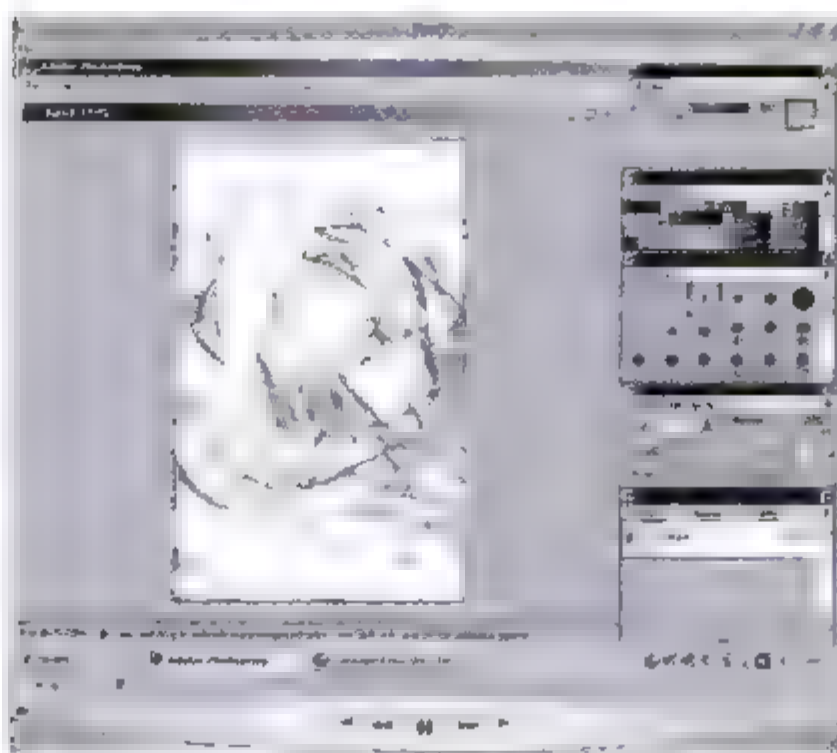
**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES  
BLUELINEPRO.COM

## spotlight

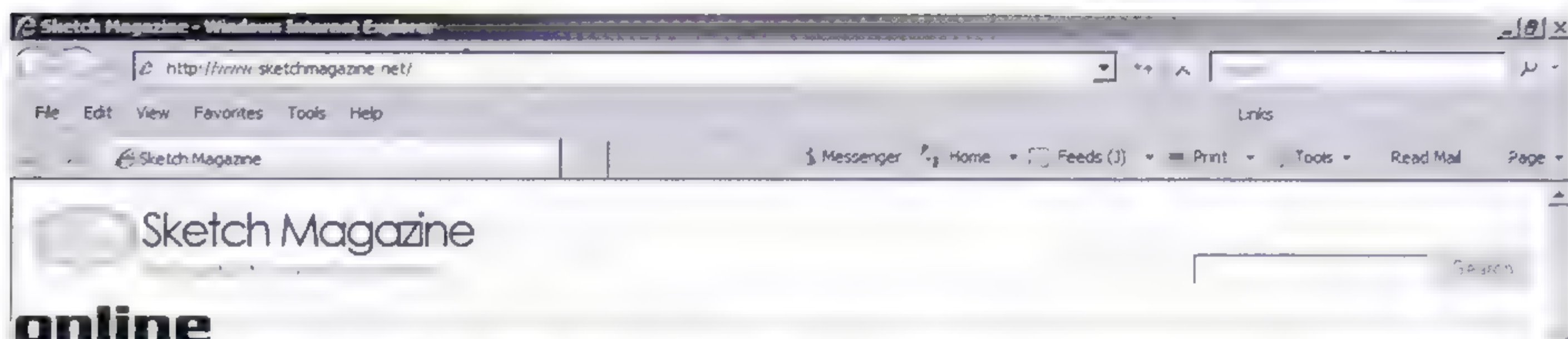


## Digital Art Tutorials: Digital Painting Photo Real by Drew

Step by step instruction to photo realistic painting in Adobe Photoshop.  
Published by Haberin Studios.







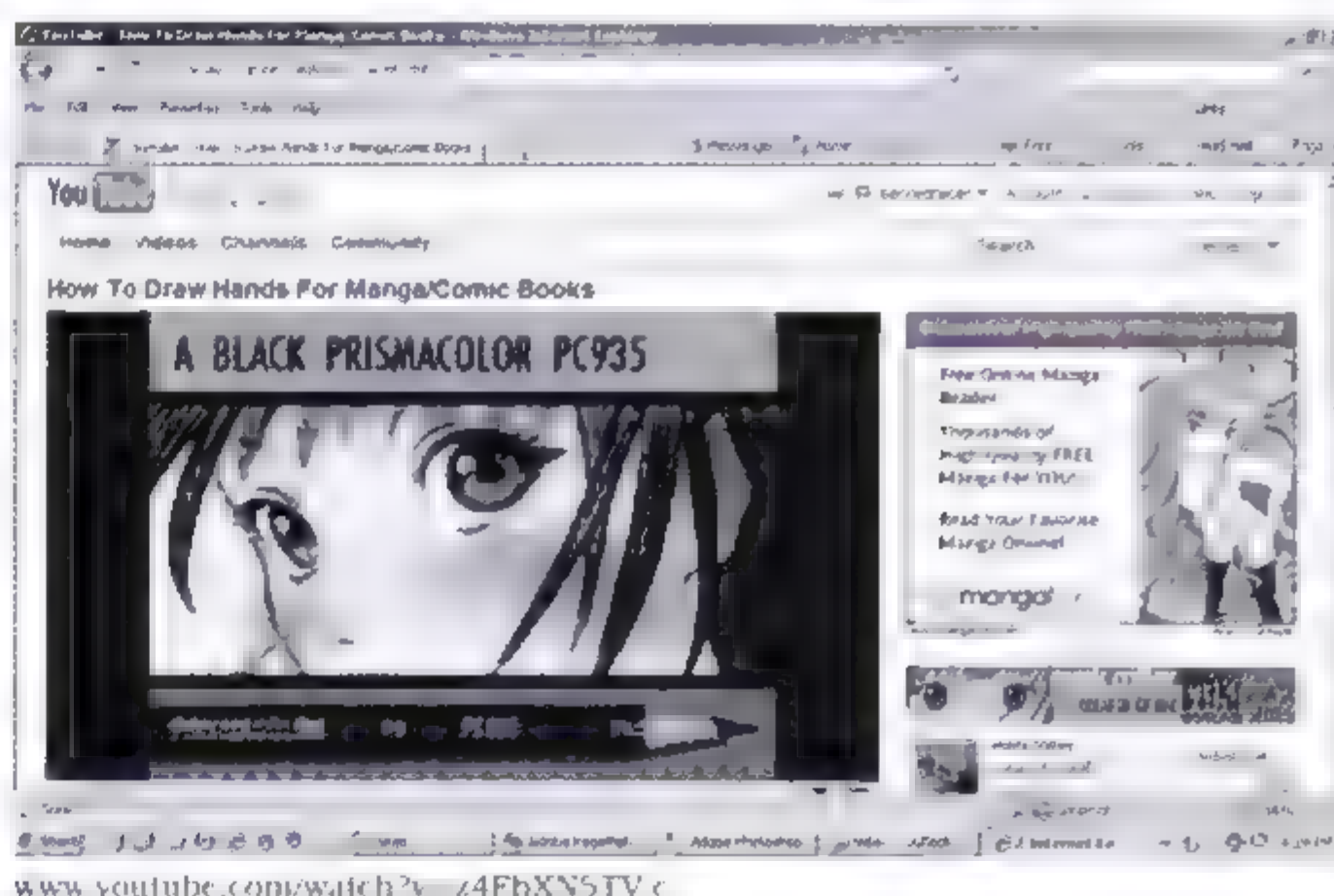
online

# SKETCHMAGAZINE.NET

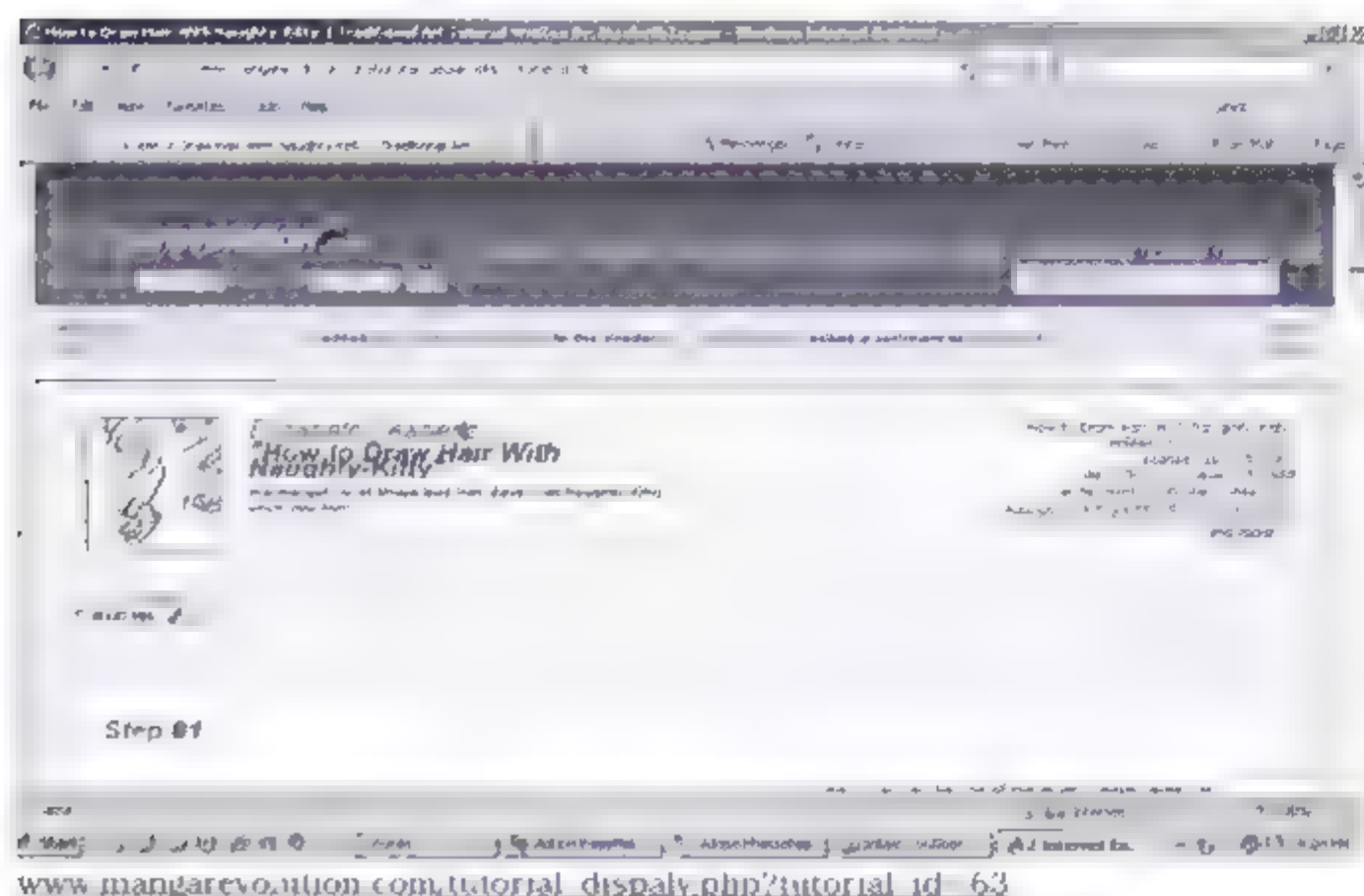
The following web sites have been featured on SKETCHMAGAZINE.NET. Each site offers a variety of How-To articles, tips and techniques. Check SKETCHMAGAZINE.NET each day for new sites, articles and interviews.



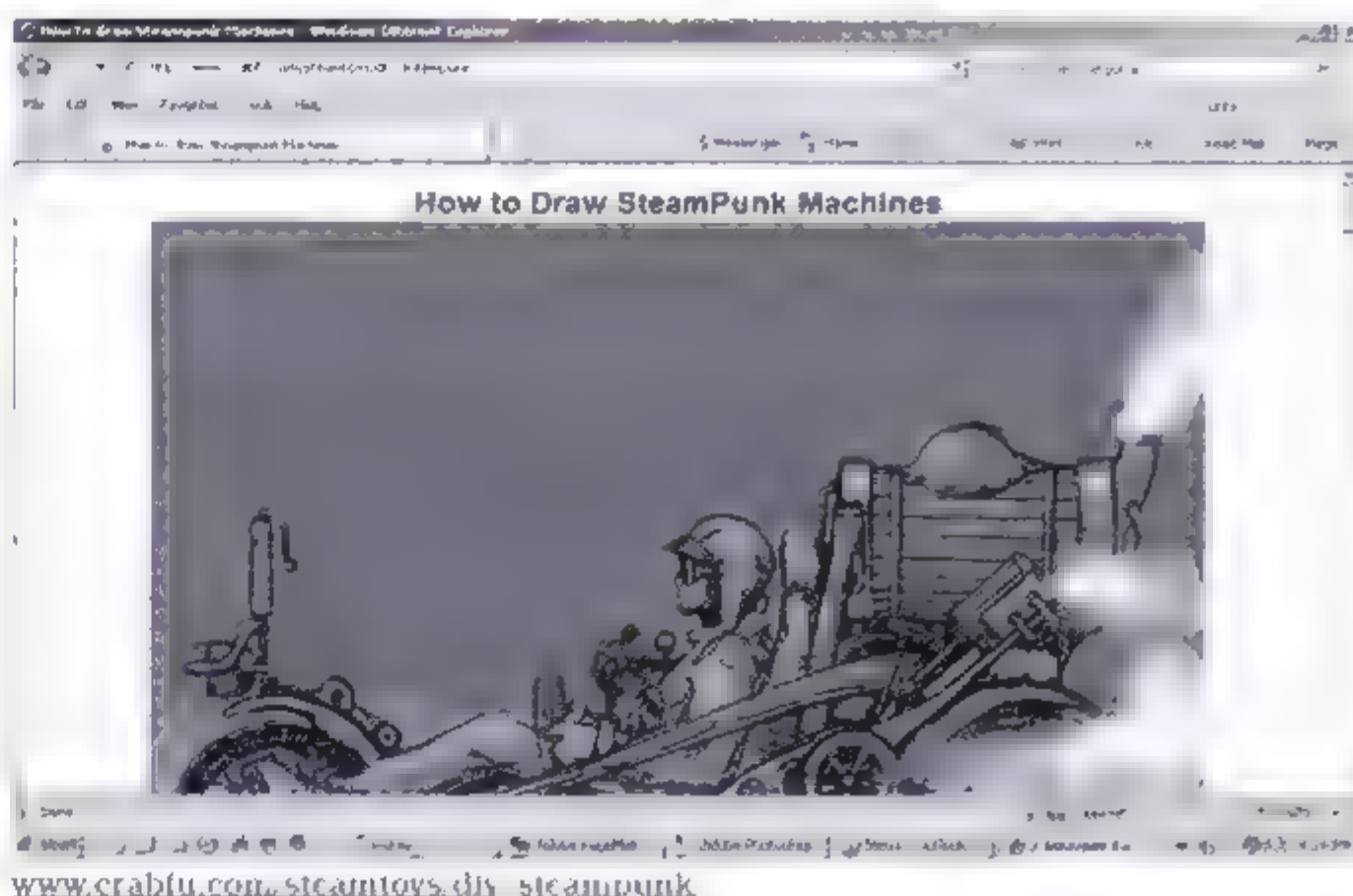
[www.tragicallygeek.com](http://www.tragicallygeek.com)



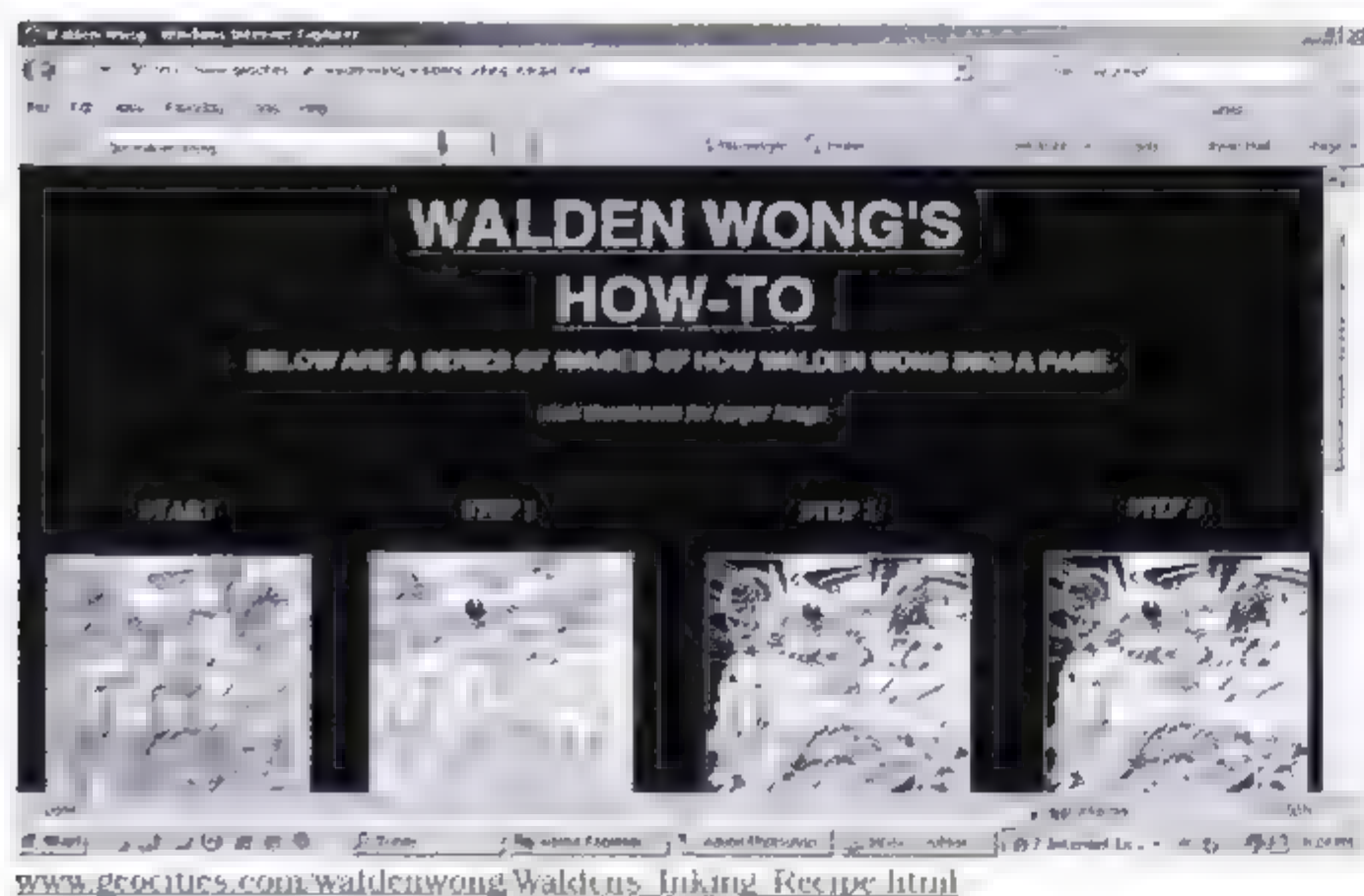
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4FbXN5TVc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4FbXN5TVc)



[www.mangarevolution.com/tutorial\\_display.php?tutorial\\_id=63](http://www.mangarevolution.com/tutorial_display.php?tutorial_id=63)



[www.crabfu.com/steamtoys/diy\\_steampunk](http://www.crabfu.com/steamtoys/diy_steampunk)



[www.geocities.com/waldenwong/Waldens\\_Linking\\_Recipe.html](http://www.geocities.com/waldenwong/Waldens_Linking_Recipe.html)



[www.johnnystaurn.com/category/art-talk/](http://www.johnnystaurn.com/category/art-talk/)





## Letters Forum

All letters received will be considered for publication. Letters published will be done so as received in regards to spelling, punctuation, etc. However, letters may be edited for length, language, and/or other considerations. All letters should be signed by the writer, as well as including the writer's legibly printed name, address, and contact numbers (phone, fax, e-mail). Opinions expressed are those of their respective letter writers, and not necessarily shared by Blue Line. While open as a critical forum, it is Blue Line's hope and intention that correspondence maintains constructive and positive elements of criticism. Simple name calling, rumor mongering, and/or maliciousness is not of interest. Unless our editor does it.

Please send your e-mail missives to [sketchletters@bluelinepro.com](mailto:sketchletters@bluelinepro.com). With all letters, please state clearly if you wish to have your address in print. We look forward to hearing from you.

Can anyone get into *Sketch Magazine* now? My 5 year old draws a great stickman. The article by Jessica Zimmer had amateurish artwork along with nonsense information.

Come on, you guys can do better.  
**William Avery**

William,  
Maybe you should go back and read your Marvel Comics from the 80's. *Sketch* offers a variety of articles from all kinds of creators. I personally enjoyed Jessica's article and hope to have more from her in the future.

**Robert**

I never read *Invincible* but your interview with **Ryan Ottley** showcasing his great artwork got me to

pick up an issue. Now I'm hooked! I've bought all the trades of the comic and look forward to the next one. I read *Sketch* to learn more about creating comics and I found a new comic to read.

Thanks, *Sketch*.  
**Bridgette Werks**

Well, thanks, Bridgette, for saying that and I'm sure Ryan and company will be glad for more new readers! That's one of the extra benefits of all this stuff we do around here: getting comics and creators into the hands and hearts of the comics community!  
**Bill**

I enjoyed the **George Trosley's** Cool Cars How-To's. They seemed like something for **Hot Rod Magazine**. Keep it up. Very cool.  
**Dan Maskey**

Very astute, Dan. **George's** stuff (and I hope there will be more to come!) has adorned the pages of those magazines. He's awesome and I'll give a shout out to artist **Brian Denham** for the intro!  
**Bill**

What is **Mitch Byrd** working on other than *Sketch Magazine*? I love his artwork and would like to pick up anything that he's drawing.  
**Brad James**

Brad,  
Mitch is working on a three part *Blood and Roses* series for my studio SkyStorm Studios. He has the first issue complete and it looks awesome. We have a couple of publishers looking at it, including a



by Don Stephenson



Top Five publisher. We'll post more info when it's available.

Robert

Who is **Rebecca Thompson**? Her artwork looks great but I can't find any of her work in any comics. Please hook me up with some sites to see more of her work.

Ryan Black

Rebecca is one of the active members of the **Art Unleashed** forum. Her screen name is **Beckna** and she continues to show off her talents there! And she may well be doing comics soon with a project from SkyStorm Studios! More on that later! And hopefully, some articles and cool artwork!

Bill

I know that **Blue Line** and *Sketch Magazine* support the **Art Unleashed** community. I was wondering if anyone can join or is it invitation only? It looks like a fun group of creators and I would like to contribute to the contest.

Theo Rudd

Here's your invite, Theo! Go to: [www.bloodandroses.com/forums](http://www.bloodandroses.com/forums) and register. It's free and open to anyone. Get in there and get active. There are some great members there to interact with and get to know. Good board. Good folks!

Bill



John Duckett  
Lexington, KY

Send all your letters and questions to:  
Sketch Magazine, 166 Mt. Zion Road, Florence, KY 41042  
or email [sketchletters@bluelinepro.com](mailto:sketchletters@bluelinepro.com)

# MARKERS



**DELETER**



**PRISMACOLOR**



**COPIC**



**BlueLinePro**  
PRO ART SUPPLIES  
[BLUELINEPRO.COM](http://BLUELINEPRO.COM)



# GHOST ZERO™

**Mood with Markers!**

By Dave Flora



Hi, my name is Dave Flora, creator of the comic Ghost Zero, appearing soon from Moonstone books. Ghost Zero is a pulp-inspired, gun-slinging, supernatural yarn that takes place in the late 1940's, and in order to make it a fitting tribute to the period (and to keep down printing costs), I decided to render the art using grayscale markers.

Now, markers themselves are pretty unforgiving. Since there's no "undo" button and you can't just erase what you've done, it's best to approach rendering your work in a fashion that will allow you as many mistakes as possible.

So, if there's no "undo" button, why the heck should a person use markers anyway? I mean, this can all be done on computer, right?

Well, yes and no. It's possible to replicate all of this marker work on the computer, and add a little flexibility by being able to repair things when you do damage to them, but the markers themselves have a certain quality or 'signature' when they are put on paper that is wonderfully organic and 'crunchy'. It was important to me, for instance, that Ghost Zero not have a "slick" feel to the finished art. I wanted the artist's hand to be apparent and the gradients to not be mirror smooth. Plus, the unexpected things that can happen are often very interesting. In the end, you can use whatever tool you want, but I think with a few simple tips, you'll find working with markers will be very rewarding, and you'll enjoy the unique look it gives to your comic.

## Tools of the Trade

So, here's a picture of the tools I commonly use to create Ghost Zero. I've got a mechanical lead holder and erasers (at the bottom of the pic) for pencil work, an assortment of Micron markers (sizes 01, 02, 05 and 08) for straight-line inks, and a Pentel brush pen for my organic lines (the pen at the very bottom of the picture).

At the top of the picture, you'll see my warm grey set of Copic markers, and in the mug beside them, Copic refills. Copic markers are pretty expensive imports, and when I first started out, I used Pentel marker sets because they were inexpensive, easy to get, and of decent quality. After working through a story or two though, I began to feel the limitations. You see, although the Pentels are cheap, they aren't refillable. This means that in the long run, you're actually paying more for your materials than you would by buying refillable markers. The basic rule-of-thumb here is that if you're just using markers for convention sketches or to experiment, Pentels are fine, but if you're going to be doing LOTS of marker work, then you really need to buy a refillable marker like the Copic.

Both kinds of markers, Pentel or Copic, have a wide tip on one end and a fine tip on the other.

Oh, although I have a prop skull in the pic, you can consider that optional.)





## Penciling



The art I'm going to use for this demo is the intro panel to a short story called "GHOST ZERO and the Cast-Iron Coffin!" and will appear in Moonstone Comic's PHANTOM #26 title as well as BUCKAROO BANZAI: PRELUDE #2.

This panel is a night scene in which Eddie Quick, our hero, his ghostly mentor, Charles Pallentine, and a mysterious lady are about to get rammed by a ghostly mini-submarine. After digging up reference material and laying out the composition, I quickly laid in the pencils. I know some folk like to work with a very hard lead, but I usually just use an H or HB. Since I'm doing the inking myself, I didn't worry about working out fully-detailed pencils.



You'll notice that I didn't use any brushwork on the flowing water. Although I could have, I chose to work that out with the markers, though the brush would have worked as well. For me, it was a large enough area that I chose the quickness of the markers, instead of the detail of the brush. Since I use either markers or brush pens, it dries almost instantly and I don't have to worry about large areas of black to dry.

When working with the Micron pens, I always use a larger size of pen for the outer, defining lines of an object, and choose a smaller pen for the inner, detail lines.

## Inking



After I have gotten the pencils where I want them, I start in with the line work. Typically, I like to do the organic lines of the figures first with the brush pen, and then follow them up with straight-line work using the Microns. I'll also use the Microns to add any fine detail work I feel is needed.

## Spot Blacks



Included in the Copic marker set is Warm Grey #10, which is close to black, but isn't technically as dark as you can get. I use it for my blacks, however, and it works fine. Using the fine end of the marker, I first outline, then fill in all areas of solid black. This will wind up giving me the outer limits of the "defining tones" of the piece... the white of the paper and the dark of the blacks.





Once my blacks and whites are established, I can start laying in my middle tones. Up until now, it has looked like a typical comic page, but this is where that bus leaves the track and mood of the markers starts to take over.

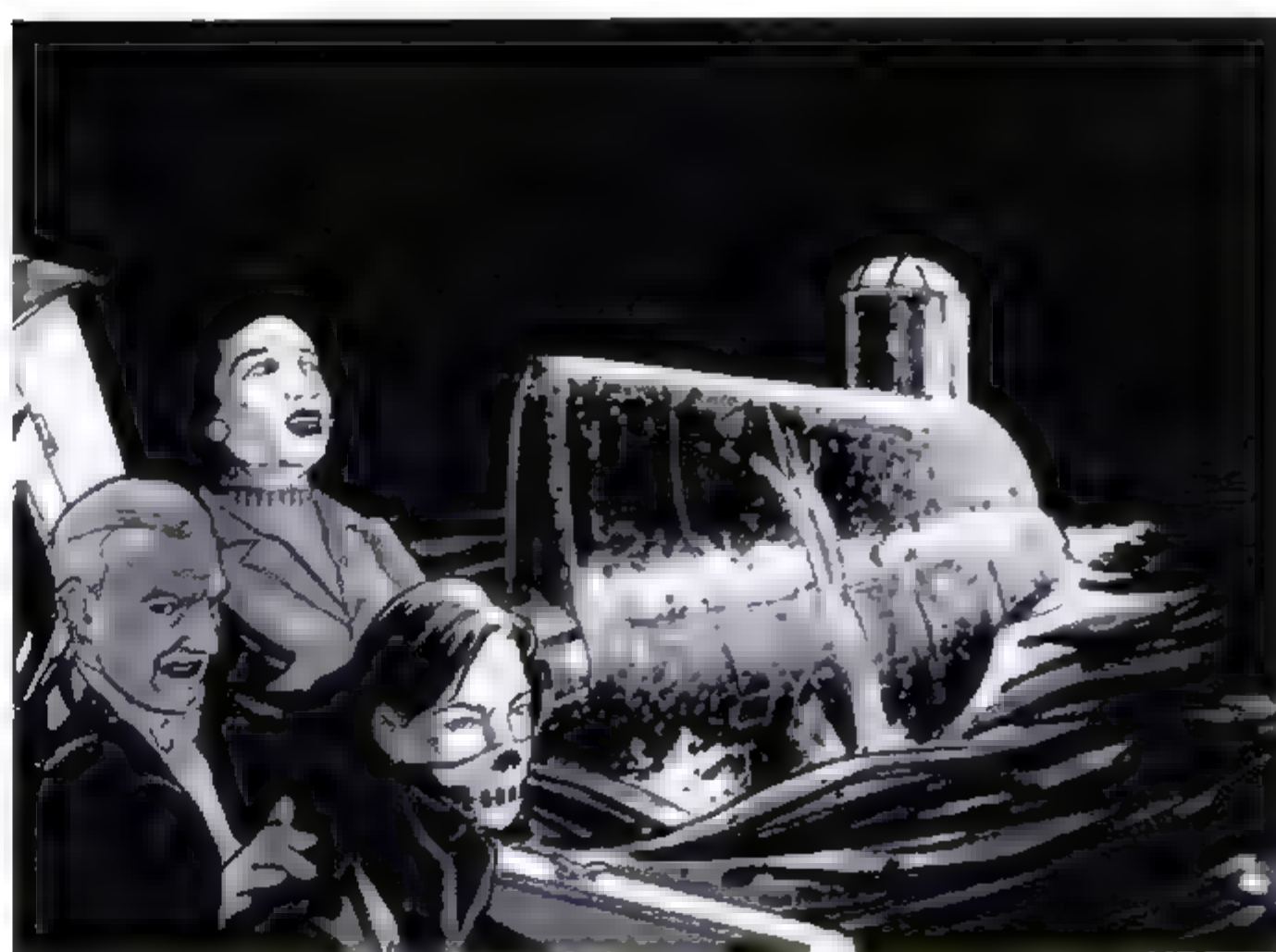
### Marker Direction



When you're laying in your spot blacks, you'll hit the first important fact about markers, which is that it can be difficult to lay down absolutely solid tones. Because of this, you would be wise to decide ahead of time how you want to fill each particular area. If you're filling in a large, flat area, you may just use the wide tip to lay down straight, broad strokes side-by-side, overlapping as little as possible. If you're filling an irregular-shaped area, you may want to use strokes that follow the contour of the shape. This is important with any shade of grey you use...it really helps suggest the three-dimensional qualities of an object. For instance, tables get straight line strokes, while a coat has curving strokes that follow the contours.

When you're beginning to add your mid-range of tones, always start with the lightest tone that you can. You can build up that tone by either going over it again with the same tone once it dries (you can get nice, subtle darks this way) or by using the next-darkest marker in the set. Take your time with this. It's simple to make something darker, but once you've gone too dark, there isn't much that can be done.

Here's a tip: Don't ever cover over everything in grey. You still want your whites in the picture to add some contrasting punch. Keep your lights white, or you could wind up with a very subdued piece...which is good for some situations, but not many.



Don't be afraid to mix up texture as you render a panel. I could have used contour lines to add greys to the submarine, for example, but by using a stippling effect, I suggest to the viewer that the hull of the submarine is rusty and pocked as if it's sat at the bottom of the ocean for a while. The same goes with the subtle stippling in the hills in the background. The circular pattern suggests individual trees.

Notice also, that layering markers can suggest transparency. I wanted to give Eddie's ghostly mentor, Charles, a translucent look, so I used darker markers to suggest the visible shape of the woman behind him, as well as Eddie's back visible through his hand.

The final thing to consider after you've gotten the grey tones where they should be is any accent whites. Using opaque white ink and a brush, or even just a white gel ink pen, you can add stark white highlights where you need them. In this picture, the only opaque white I added was the pupil of Charles' ghostly eye.

You'll notice that I changed the head of the woman in the final version of the piece. This is where Photoshop really comes in handy. I just drew the head on another page, scanned it, and added it in digitally. Hey, I'm not a technophobe...)

And there you have it! I hope you've seen a hint of the flexibility and quality that markers can give your comic, convention sketch or sketch card.

If you want to see more examples of my marker work, hop over to the Ghost Zero Blog at [www.ghostzero.com](http://www.ghostzero.com)!



Sketch



# BOOKS, TOOLS, ETCETERA...

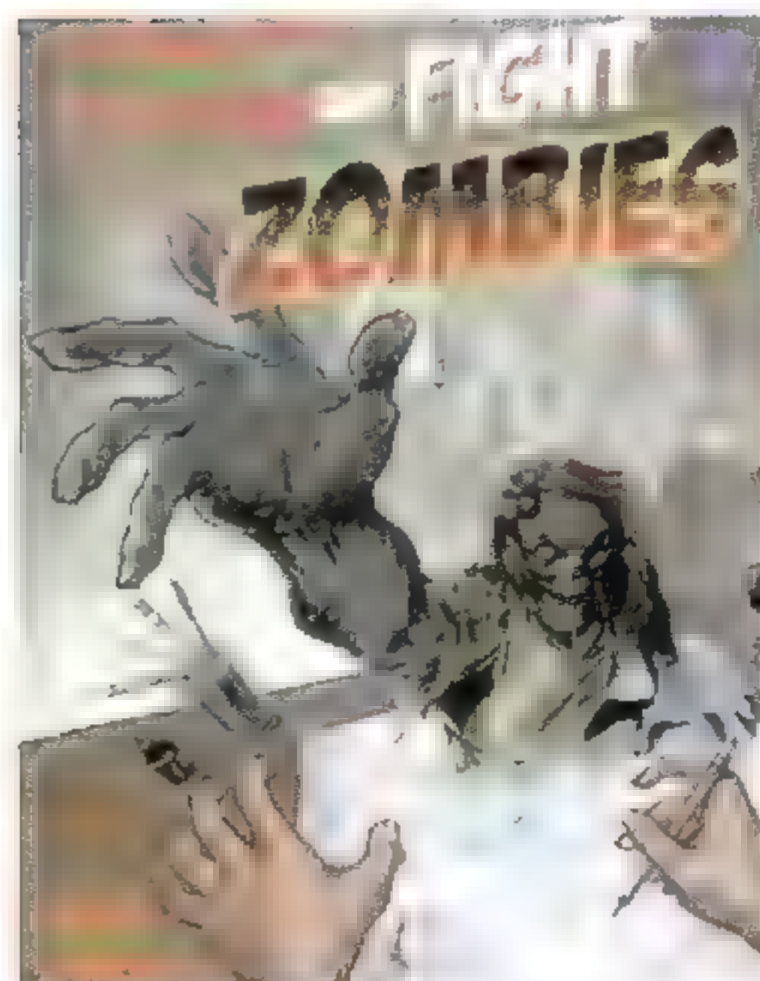
## FAIRYLAND



**How To Draw & Paint Fairyland**  
Linda Ravenscroft  
Barron's  
Isbn: 978-0-7641-3953-6 \$21.99



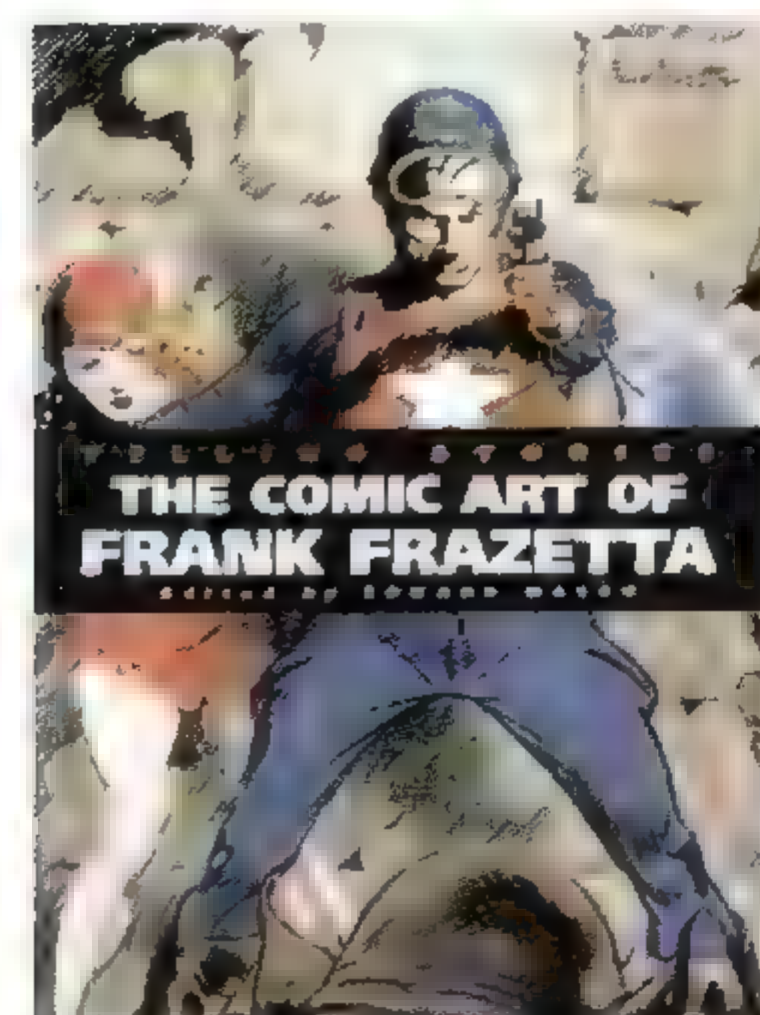
**The World of Disgaea 2**  
Broccoli Books  
Isbn: 978-1-5974-1152-3 \$19.99



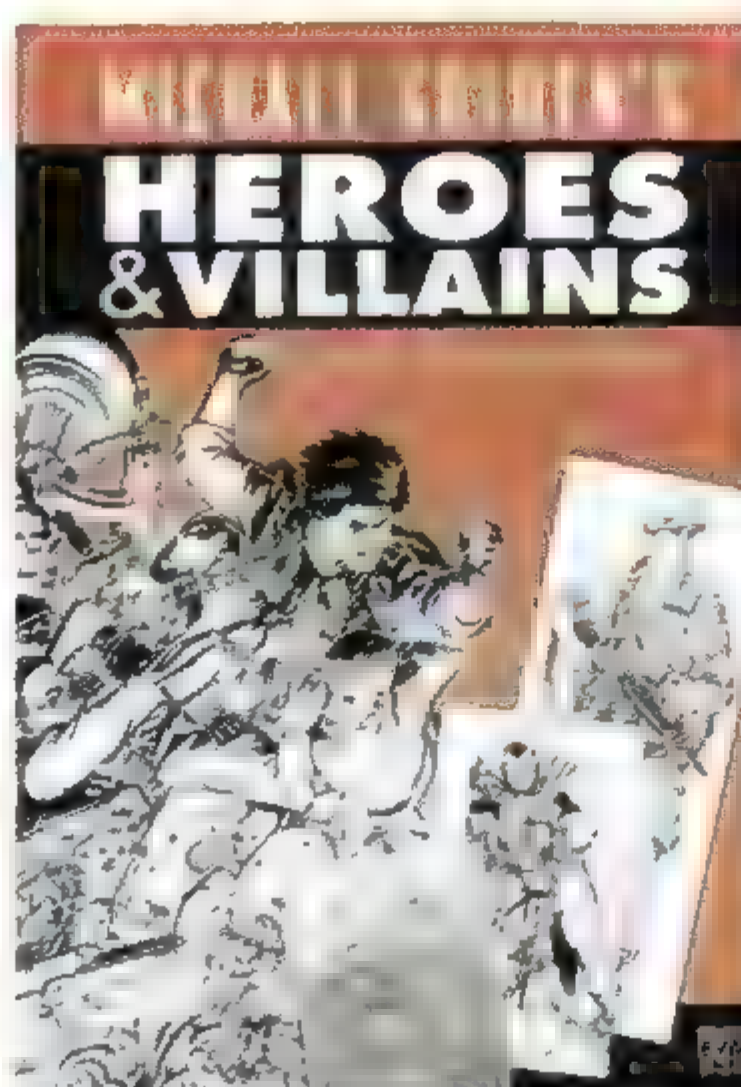
**How To Draw and Fight Zombies**  
By Ben Dufin  
AP Entertainment  
Isbn: 978-0-9801255-5-9 \$19.95



**The Art of The Video Game**  
By Josh Jenisch  
Quirk Books  
Isbn: 978-1-59474-277-4 \$40.00



**Telling Stories**  
**The Comic Art of FRANK FRAZETTA**  
Edited by Edward Mason  
BlackBart  
Isbn: 978-1-59929-020-1 \$49.95



**Michael Golden's Heroes & Villains Sketchbook**  
Michael Golden  
Little Eva Ink  
\$39.95 signed \$100.00



**Webcomics 2.0**  
Steve Horton and Sam Romero  
Course Technology  
Isbn: 978-1-59863-462-4 \$29.99



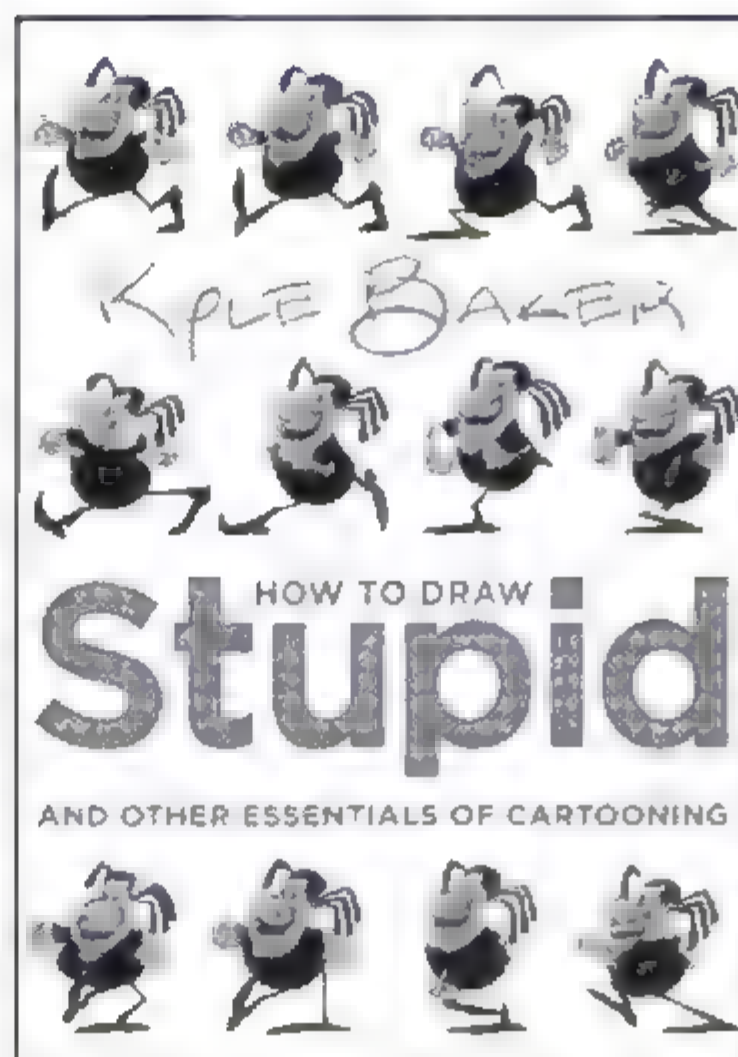
**The Art of ALEX NIÑO**  
Edited by Manuel Auad  
Auad Publishing  
Isbn: 978-0-9669381-6-6 \$24.95





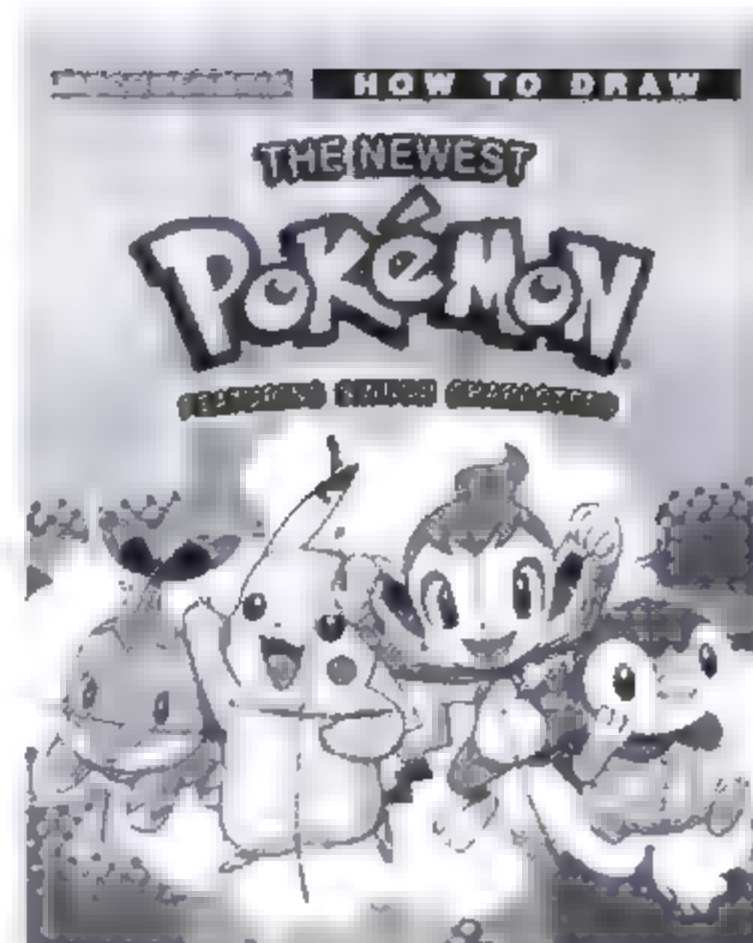
**SHARPIE PEN by SANFORD**

The first Sharpie pen "Won't bleed through paper." Great for note-taking, letter writing, journaling, card making and more! Durable and smudge resistant. Precise, consistent line width. 4 bold colors: Blue, Black, Red, Green. \*Results may vary based on paper characteristics. Bold, vivid, marker quality color. Smooth writing action. Specially formulated acid-free permanent ink. Quick-drying. \$2.50



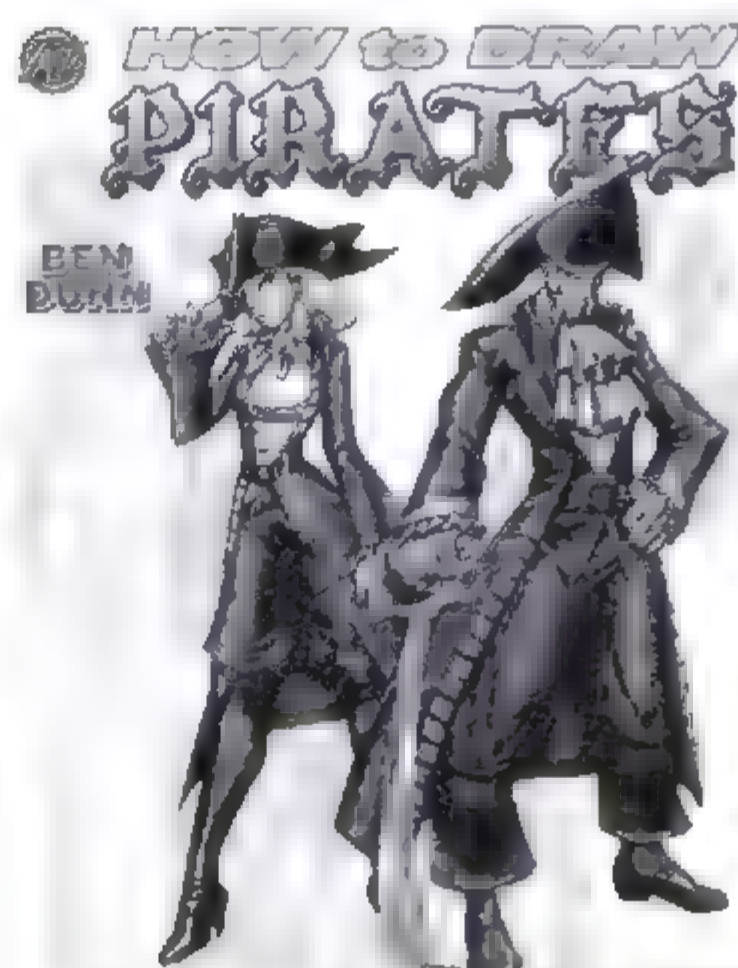
**How To Draw Stupid and Other Essentials of Cartooning**

Kyle Baker / Watson Gupilli  
Isbn: 978-0-8230-0143-9 \$16.95



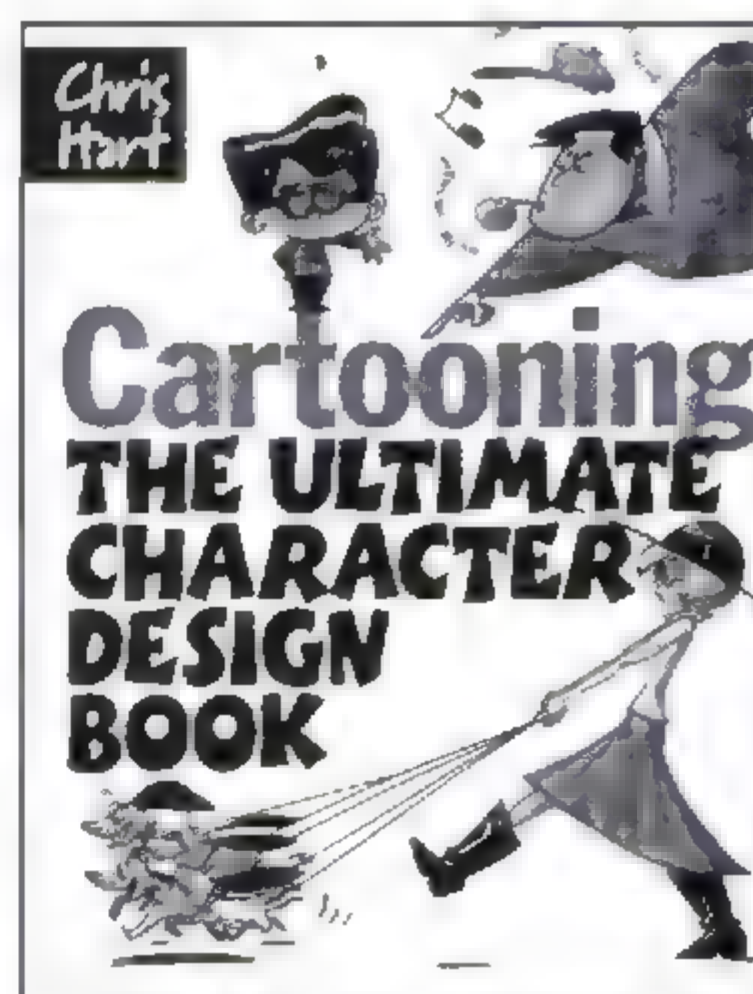
**How To Draw The Newest Pokemon**

Scholastic  
Isbn: 978-0-545-02620-8 \$4.99



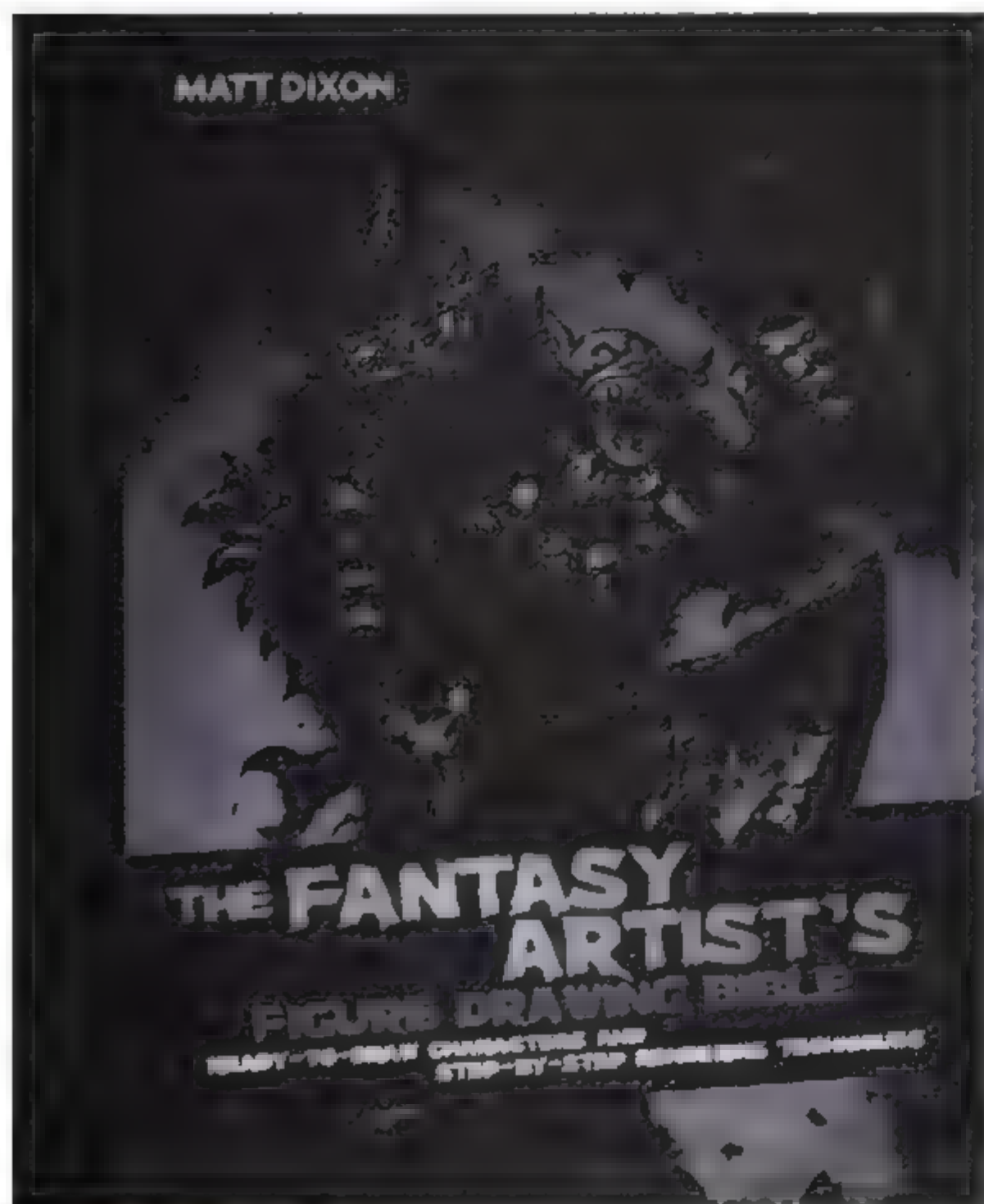
**How To Draw: Pirates**

Ben Dunn / AP Entertainment  
Isbn: 978-0-9792723-7-0 \$19.95



**Cartooning the Ultimate Character Design Book**

Chris Hart / sixth & spring books  
Isbn: 978-1-933027-44-5 \$19.95



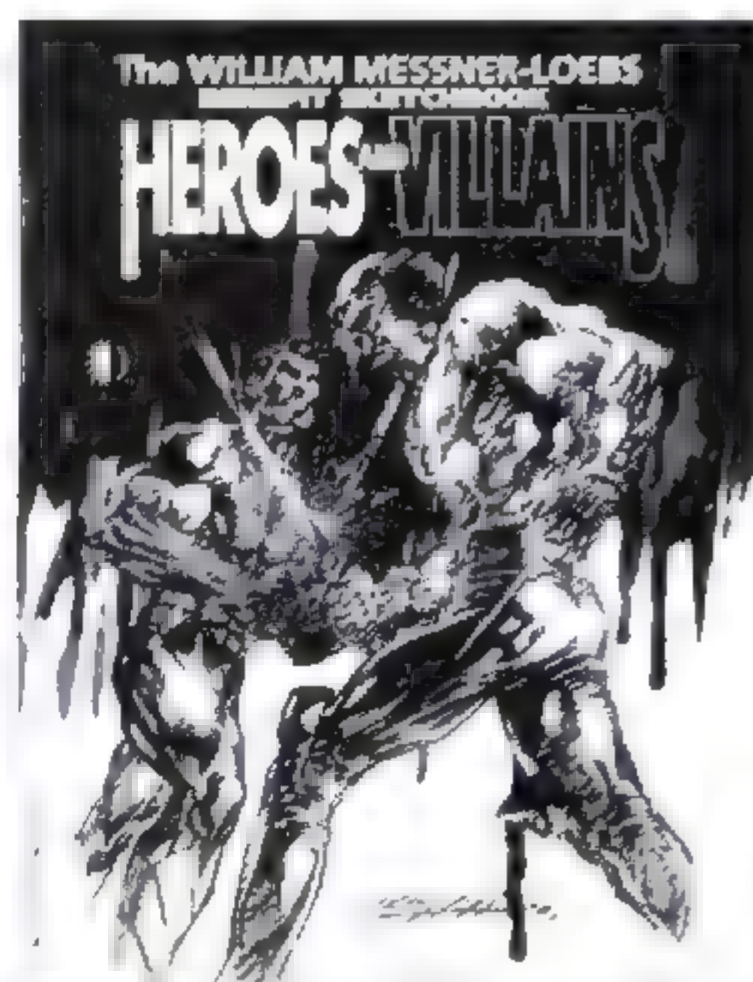
**The Fantasy Artist's Figure Drawing Bible**

Matt Dixon / Barron's  
Isbn: 978-0-7641-6114-8 \$21.99



**Paint or Pixel: The Digital Divide in Illustration**

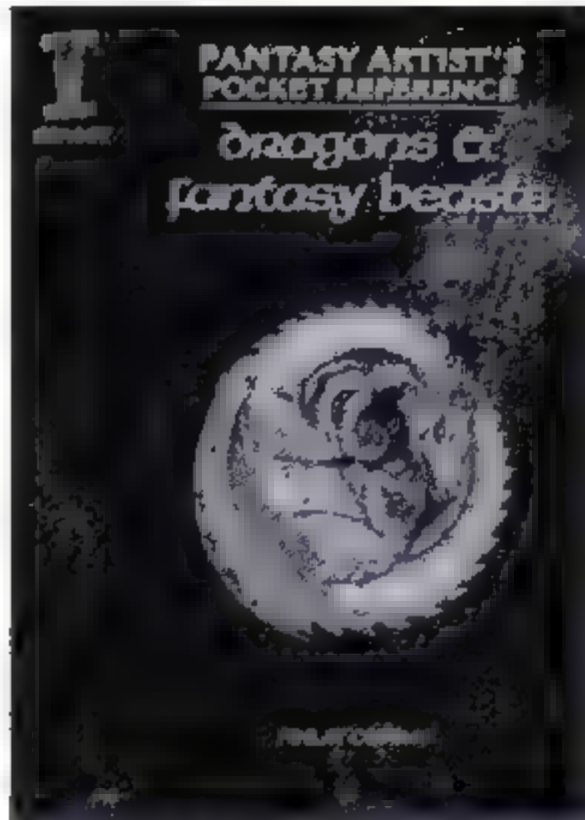
Jane Frank / Nonstop Press  
Isbn: 978-1-933065-10-6 \$29.95



**The William Messner-Loebs Benefit Sketchbook: Heroes and Villains**

TwoMorrows Publishing  
Isbn: 1-893905-52-7 \$24.95





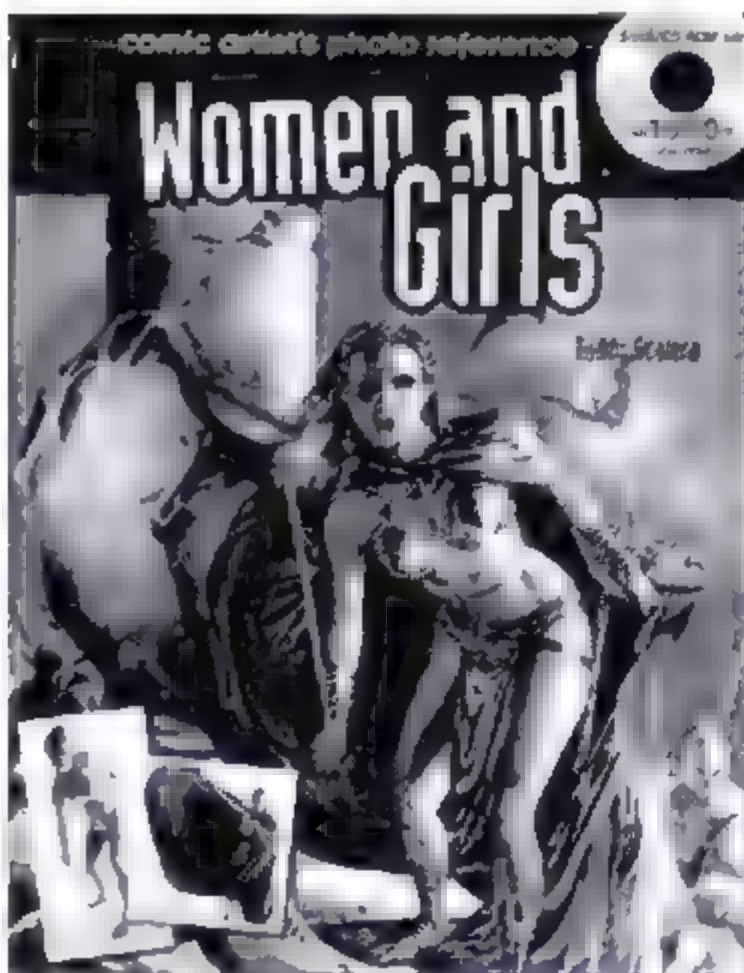
**Fantasy Artist's Pocket Reference Dragons & Fantasy Beasts**  
Finlay Cowan / Impact  
Isbn 978-1-60061-050-9 \$12.99



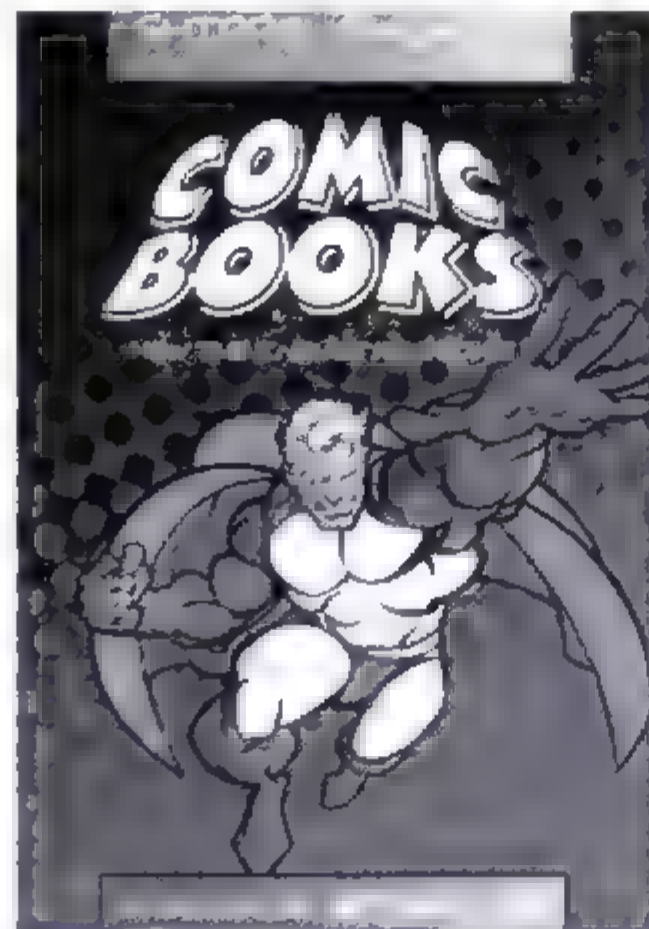
**Art of Modern Rock Mini #2: Poster Girls**  
Dennis King / Chronicle Books  
Isbn 978-0-8118-6119-9 \$18.95



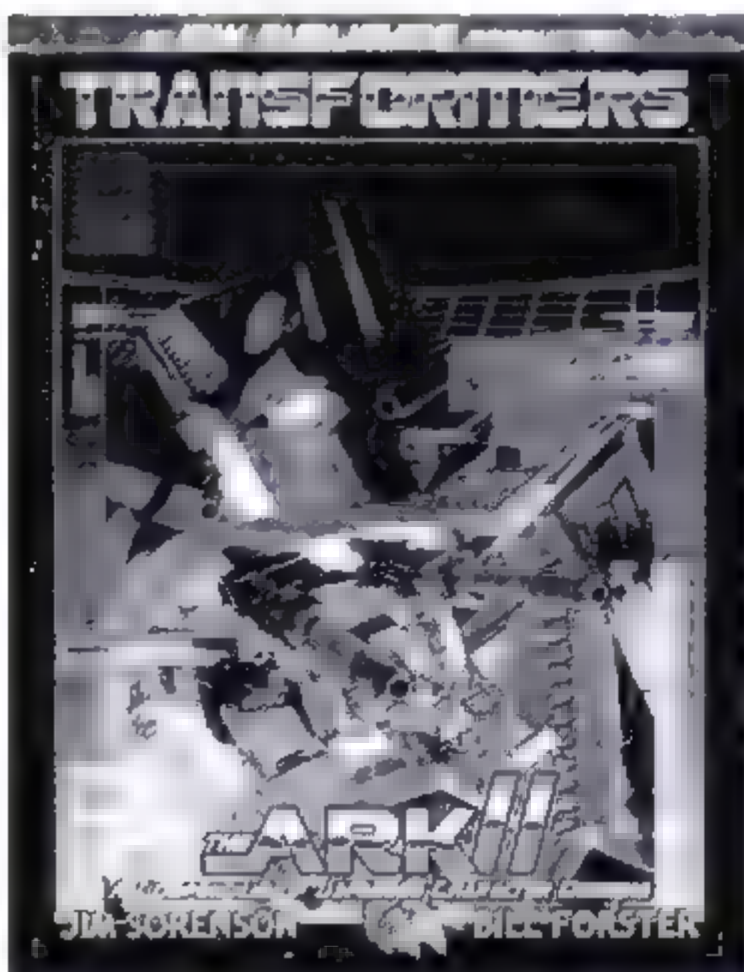
**The Art of Marc Silvestri**  
Top Cow  
Isbn 978-1-58240-904-7 \$29.99



**Comic Artist's Photo Reference: Women and Girls**  
Buddy Scaler / Impact  
Isbn 978-1-60061-003-5 \$24.99



**Comic Books: How The Industry Works**  
Shirrel Rhoades / Peter Lang  
Isbn 978-0-8204-8892-9 \$32.95



**Transformers the Ark II**  
Jim Sorenson Bill Forster  
IDW Publishing  
Isbn 978-160010180-9 \$19.99



**Black & White Images: The Golden Era of Pen & Ink Illustration 1890-1922**  
Vadeboncoeur Collection  
Isbn 978-0-9724697-4-6 \$20.00



**The Art of Faery**  
Brian Froud / Paper Tiger  
Isbn: 1-84340-095-2 \$29.95





In this article, I am going to discuss how I put together my color swatches in Photoshop. Before I dig into that, though, I think it's best if I explain why I go to the trouble to make these color swatches.

Before I go on, let me explain the concept of “local” color, a.k.a. “mother color.” That’s the color of something in neutral light. An orange, for example, has an orange hue, although in bright light, or colored light, or deep shadow, or reflected light, that orange’s hue can change to many other colors. In neutral lighting, however, it’s simply orange. That local color is what I save in my swatch, because I would rather control the lighting conditions later when I’m rendering the image.

Next, go to the upper right hand corner of the swatch window, select the toggle button for the menu again, and select **Save Swatches**. Give the new swatch a name, and when you hit enter it will be saved as an ACO file in Photoshop's Color Swatches folder. You don't have to save your Swatch every time you use it, but you should save it every time you add new colors or replace it with another swatch. In this way, you can build a collection of color swatches to use again and again, taking the guesswork out of the choosing colors.





It should be noted that I keep my color swatches in the Large List format, because I want the text label for each color to show. Adding a text label to the colors is quite easy, because all you have to do is double click on the text that lays to the left of the color, and its label, then, can be edited. Be sure to label the color in a manner that makes sense, such as "bruise," or "green eyes," or "Utopian's piping."

By the time you have collected scores of colors, you will probably want to better organize your custom swatch. Inside the Preset manager, you can drag and drop the colors into convenient groupings, rearranging your list as you see fit.

To clarify what I've been writing about, I'm including my own general color swatch for you to download. You can study what I did, or use it as it, or do whatever you want with it.

[http://johnnysaturn.com/extras/General\\_Swatches.aco](http://johnnysaturn.com/extras/General_Swatches.aco)

[http://johnnysaturn.com/extras/General\\_Swatches.ase](http://johnnysaturn.com/extras/General_Swatches.ase)

I mention that I'm putting up my 'general' swatch, because I break my colors into two separate groups, the 'general' and the 'specific' ones. The specific swatches are all my characters' colors, primarily being their costumes and power effects, and as such are of little to no use for anyone but me. The general swatch, on the other hand, is much more universal.

In the general swatch, I include colors that get used frequently. For example, I have eight base skin tones, and numerous colors for specialized use such as bruises, under skin veins, scar tissue, old tattoos, and the

like. Painting skin is a specialized skill, and I'll cover that in detail in a future article. For eyes, I include the actual color of the whites of eyes, the pink on the inner corner of the eyes, and eight eye colors. For the mouth, I include two colors of teeth, gums, and lips. I include seven common hair colors, as well. Beyond the human hues, I include blood, water, camouflage, cityscape, grass, fire, fog, smoke, bricks, metals, latex, white cloth, the sun, the moon, the sky, and bandages.

The colors in the swatch are local colors, and they do not take into account lightning conditions. For example, a storm tossed sea is going to be colored much differently than a calm sea on a bright, sunny day. As a loose guideline, remember that light in the morning and at sunset is rosy red; noonday light is bright yellow; nighttime light is purple; fluorescent light is white, etc. Seasons affect the color of light, too, allowing for gray winter days, muted autumnal colors, and other variations. There many specialized situations with colored light, and its effects on the colors can be haunting.

There's a great deal more I could tell you, such as warm light has cool shadows, and cool light has warm shadows. Or, about reflective light. Or about colors that 'flatten out,' or about the desaturation of shadows. Coloring is fascinating, and you should never stop learning. I consider myself a journeyman at this, and that's fine, because I still find great joy in exploring color.



Sketch



# CLASSIFIEDS

Sketch Magazine, the comic book industries magazine, announces that every classified word ad placed in this publication will appear on the Sketch Magazine website at [www.bluelinepro.com](http://www.bluelinepro.com). In addition to

Classified advertising are 25¢ per word, with a \$4.00 minimum. Any space between letters begins a new word.

## Classified Display Advertising.

Size	1x	3x	6x
Two inches	\$96.00	\$92.00	\$87.00
Three inches	\$169.00	\$161.00	\$153.00
Four inches	\$198.00	\$188.00	\$179.00

## Classifications to choose from

2000	Announcements	2050	Inker Wanted
2005	Artist Wanted	2055	Letterers
2010	Art Supplies	2060	Miscellaneous
2015	Associations	2065	Original Artwork
2020	Books For Sale	2070	Penciler Wanted
2025	Books Wanted	2075	Printers
2030	Colorist	2080	Professional Services
2035	Color Separations	2085	Publishers
2040	Comics For Sale	2090	Services
2045	Comics Wanted	2095	Shows & Conventions

# SKETCH

## MAGAZINE

c/o BLUE LINE PRO  
8385 U.S. Highway 42, Florence, KY 41042  
(859) 282-0096 Fax: (859) 282-9412  
e-mail [sketchad@bluelinepro.com](mailto:sketchad@bluelinepro.com)  
website: [www.bluelinepro.com](http://www.bluelinepro.com)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS 2000

**KUTANDPASTE.COM** - Join other artists in displaying gallery quality artwork for a fraction of the cost of making a website. /#30

**GRAPHIC ARTIST/Designer/Illustrator**

Looking for some fun/creative freelance stuff to do on the side.

<http://www.thefalconhaslanded.com/#27>

**CLASSICALLY TRAINED** artist, in prison seeks outside contact to share art and newsletter with contact through friend at [jcm7571@smsu.edu](mailto:jcm7571@smsu.edu). /#27.

**KUT AND PASTE** A family inspired Dad created gallery. [www.kutandpaste.com](http://www.kutandpaste.com) / #24.

**ARTIST FOR HIRE** Penciler/Illustrator Creative work at different levels contact Ken Ray for samples [gridrunners@yahoo.com](mailto:gridrunners@yahoo.com) /#23.

**TALENT SEARCH** - Artist, Writers, Colorist, and Letterers, find a comics gig at Digital Webbing visit us at [DIGITALWEBBING.COM](http://DIGITALWEBBING.COM) /#22

**COMIC SUCCESS! DISCOVER HOW.** Request Free Comic Inspiration Study Newsletter. J. Decatur, DMS Enterprises, 3647 Broadway, #5-C NY NY 10031.

**CARANO GRAPHICS.COM** - home of the Christian e-comicbook super-hero called vitron. Order or download from site. Visit [www.caranographics.com](http://www.caranographics.com).

**STERNWORDS PRESS:** Online comics and Digital Tales. Featuring The Brotheers Brandenburg Wizards for Hire. Visit us at [www.sternwords.com](http://www.sternwords.com)!

**IF YOU** like a copy of my Reflection Newsletter, please send S.A.S.E. artist Robert Clyde Allen, P.O. Box 488 Spencer N.C. 28159

**ORLANDO BAEZ** artist of "The Giant Clown" looking to network this creator owned project. Email [guzman@netcnct.net](mailto:guzman@netcnct.net).

**WRITERS/ETC** Need people for a new company. Send submissions and S.A.S.E. to: Freelance 432 Wilson Topeka KS 66616-1152

**WWW.STICKLEYANDJONES.COM** - Daily online humor comic features daily reviews and other projects.

**AMERICA is great.** We are a nation full of hope and dreams. God Bless America, everyone, and everything.

**RAYD! PORTFOLIO** online: penciler, inker, colorist, letterer, web and graphic designer. Pre-press knowledge, professional experience, seeking more. Fair rates. [www.geocities.com/ray\\_dillon](http://www.geocities.com/ray_dillon)

**KISS ME COMIX** has two explosive slammin jammin kick butt titles; Serenade Bounty Hunter \$3.00 each. 10040 South Lafayette, Chicago IL 60628t

**WRITER WANTED** to develop fantasy story/ comic send samples to [dnewbold8@hotmail.com](mailto:dnewbold8@hotmail.com)

## ARTIST WANTED 2005

**LOOKING FOR PENCILERS,** inkers,

colorists, letterers for upcoming webcomics. contact [jake@viciouscirclecomics.com](mailto:jake@viciouscirclecomics.com), work to be on spec. / #35

**MANGA ARTIST** Incarcerated, aspiring maga artist seeks correspondence with other manga artists. Influences-Final Fantasy, Full Metal Alchemist, Inuyasha, etc. Mark Flanagan 15583706, TRC I 82911 Beach Access Rd., Umatilla, OR 97882/#30

**ARTIST WANTED** Aspiring Comics book writer seeks artist for collaborations, I have scripts written. Contact Josh Blair at [imgladimnotagirl@yahoo.com](mailto:imgladimnotagirl@yahoo.com) / #24

**THREAD MAGAZINE** looking for pulp and EC style heavy shadows sharp angles [dougheev@dayzim.com](mailto:dougheev@dayzim.com) /#23

**RAGECOMICS.COM** is looking for creators interested in doing short stories for an anthology book. Contact: [joe@ragecomics.com](mailto:joe@ragecomics.com).

**TIM STILES** artist for hire comic books/comic strips experienced 25 years on the prairie visit my portfolio <http://www.geocities.com/stilesd/index.html>

## BOOK FOR SALE 2020

**TURN ME ON** dead man - Shellac Jones: River of Love now available. \$2.50 + \$1.00 shipping. Call 941-365-8048 or [www.flyinggear.com](http://www.flyinggear.com)

**GO READ** four FREE chapter of Tony's Sci-Fi novel at [www.tonymarin.com/home.html](http://www.tonymarin.com/home.html) Spread the word.

## BOOKS WANTED 2025

**DISNEY-TYPE** cartoonist & aspiring animator seeks how-to books on writing childrens books, comedy, animation / video scripts. Adobe Illsutrator also wanted. [jcross@watvc.net](mailto:jcross@watvc.net) / #24

## COMICS FOR SALE 2040

**WWW.WRITHANDSHINE.COM** Story about an underground DJ and his Guinness loving friend in New Orleans. Two new weekly strips at [www.opi8.com](http://www.opi8.com).

**STALE INK COMIX** is the 2<sup>nd</sup> revolution in underground comics! Send \$4.00 to P.O. Box 153 Idledale Colo. 80453.

## COMICS WANTED 2045

**ALIEN LEGION'S** "on the Edge" #2 or "One Planet at a Time" #3. Email: [mustarddragon@msn.com](mailto:mustarddragon@msn.com).

## MISCELLANEOUS 2060

**WANTED SOMEONE** to help find reference pictures. Will pay. Write: Donald R. Arnold #11926213, 82911 Beach Access Rd. Umatilla OR 97882 / #24

**FREE LANCE ARTIST** Specializing in RPG character design. Detailed work done in pencil or ink. [becanfreeman@earthlink.net](mailto:becanfreeman@earthlink.net) /#25.

**HELP NEEDED!** Artist looking for someone to share ideas and techniques with. Open to all styles. William Lindley 822934, 1300 FM 655, Rosharun, TX 77583 /#22

**ART WORK,** tips, and suggestions wanted. Please write me at: James Bush 126884 6246 Lambie Rd. Suisun, CA 94585

**FREE "Devil Boy" stickers.** Send S.A.S.E. to: Vblast P.O. Box 66337 Burien WA 98166-0337

**ARTIST LOOKING** for publisher, really good prison artwork for sale. Write for samples. Jesus Garcia #C51997, PO Box 7500 C9/220 CA 95531

**CHILDREN'S BOOK** Writer and illustrator looking for company to publish books through. Contact at [unclepanda31@yahoo.com](mailto:unclepanda31@yahoo.com).

**REFERENCE VIDEO** Renaissance Swordfighting 96-Minute video from England. \$40.00 check money-order. Call Harold at 614-231-8339 for details.

## ORIGINAL ARTWORK 2065

**A STORY** about a 15 year old girl who runs a hobby store. Humorous comic strip! <http://www.gashaponshop.net/#27>.

**Tired of Hallmark's** Show you care with cards that kick ass! Chris Hobdy #94867 Box 600 Canon City CO 81215

## PENCILER WANTED 2070

**ORLANDO BAEZ** artist will pencil pin-ups from Super Heroes etc. E-Mail for price and info [guzman@netcnct.net](mailto:guzman@netcnct.net) / #24

## PROFESSIONAL SER. 2080

**GREG HARMS** ( [myspace.com/ghost\\_bill](http://myspace.com/ghost_bill) ) and Roman Morales III -Third Empire Studio( [myspace.com/thirdempirestudios](http://myspace.com/thirdempirestudios) ) offering wide range of services. [ghosthillgh@yahoo.com](mailto:ghosthillgh@yahoo.com) #38

**WWW.STATEOFMINDAPPAREL.COM** Custom screenprinting and artwork, illustration. Turn your creations into wearable apparel, custom design available. [sirkuss@hotmail.com](mailto:sirkuss@hotmail.com) / #24.

**GRAPHIC DESIGN & MARKETING** Logos, brochures, magazines, web sites, and more. Comic book & character sketches, concepts and more. [HESTERDESIGNS.COM](http://HESTERDESIGNS.COM) /#22

**EZZELL DESIGN COMPANY** Cover art, pin-ups, illustration and ink. [EZZELLDISEGN.COM](http://EZZELLDISEGN.COM) or contact Nathan "EZ" Ezzell at 804-932-4029 or [artist@ezzelldesign.com](mailto:artist@ezzelldesign.com) /#22

**GRAPHIC DESIGN,** Illustration, Flatting, Coloring and More! Contact Tanis Design at [tanis\\_design@hotmail.com](mailto:tanis_design@hotmail.com) -or- [http://tanis\\_design.tripod.com/](http://tanis_design.tripod.com/)

**EXPERIENCED,** professional, comic book penciler currently available. Experienced with inking and Photoshop gray scaling. Skilled storyteller. For more information, see [www.storystudios.com](http://www.storystudios.com).

**CARICATURIST** available to work through mail. 20 plus years experience. NCN member. Contact Kent Roberts at [caricaturist@webtv.net](mailto:caricaturist@webtv.net).

**GLOBAL ROCKET STUDIO.** Illustration, logo, storyteller, poster, painter, inker, penciller, writer, graphic artist. 2320 Minnesota Avenue S.E. Washington D.C. 20020

## PUBLISHERS 2085

**PROJECT4PUBLISHING** is proud to announce the publication of it's first anthology "Fushion X" by El Paso's local talent! website: [project4publishing.com/#30](http://project4publishing.com/#30)

**OWN A PUBLISHING COMPANY** for \$152 Free details Priority Profit Press P.O. Box 8028 Lewiston Maine 04243-8028 /#22

**COMIC ARTIST GUILD (CAG)** Artist's/ Creators our 3rd Anthology is available this December! Be sure to check it out [www.comicartguild.com/#22](http://www.comicartguild.com/#22)

## SERVICES 2090

**ALWAYS LOOKING** for new artist to collaborate with! [www.artwanted.com/nihm](http://www.artwanted.com/nihm) is my page. I write, pencil, ink, color and letter. / #0502

**AMAZING PENCIL** and inking talent, but no experience yet. Really love inking please contact 917-299-4161 / #24.

**SHAWN COOLIDGE: CARTOONIST** for hire. Pinups, poster art will draw panels on 8 1/2 x 11 up to 11 x 17. Commissions available. email at [americanflatire@cs.com](mailto:americanflatire@cs.com) /#22

## WORK WANTED 2195

**UNIQUE STYLE ARTIST!** Penciler/Inker. Wide Range Of Talents. Looking For Big Break. For Samples Contact Scott Ando At [ricebowl24@aol.com](mailto:ricebowl24@aol.com)

**SUPER HERO** penciller: artist/creator looking for his first big break. Email [mikensullivan@aol.com](mailto:mikensullivan@aol.com)

**SKETCH MAGAZINE SUBSCRIBERS  
REMEMBER TO USE YOUR FREE  
CLASSIFIED.**



# SKETCH MAGAZINE - BACK ISSUES - CLUB BLUE MEMBERSHIP

Attention Sketch Magazine readers! Here's your chance to build a valuable library of comic book creative reference and fill in the gaps of your own Sketch archives. Each issue is a timeless source of useful material and inspiring artwork for the comic book enthusiast, providing time-proven and practical information that creators of all levels will find invaluable.



NEXT ISSUE...

## SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE!!!

For \$35.70 a year you can receive valuable information for comic book creators, including tips on writing, penciling, inking, lettering, computer coloring and other technical aspects of the comic profession. There are also many informational articles by successful comic book creators.

Not only do you get six issues of *Sketch Magazine*, which includes the Blue Line Pro Shop catalog - with exclusive collectibles and very affordable art supplies - each subscriber receives a **FREE Club Blue** membership, 15% off all your Blue Line art supply purchases, \$15 discount coupon toward your next art supply purchase, a **FREE 20 word** classified in each issue, **FREE Club Blue** members only merchandise and much more.

### SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

And Receive...

- \$15.00 Discount coupon for Blue Line art products.
- 15% Discount OFF all your Blue Line art supply purchases.
- A FREE 20 word classified in each issue of Sketch Magazine you receive.
- FREE Club Blue membership.
- Club Blue members receive members-only merchandise and convention only collectibles.

☐ \$35.70 inside U.S.

☐ \$49.00 Canada & Mexico

☐ \$98.00 Foreign

name \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_

city \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

Send \$35.70 to: Sketch Magazine c/o Blue Line Pro

P.O. Box 6426

Florence, KY 41022-6426

859-282-0096 / Fax: 859-282-9412

On-line: [WWW.BLUELINEPRO.COM](http://WWW.BLUELINEPRO.COM)





# comicsXP

Discover Comics again... for the First time!

[comicsXP.com](http://comicsXP.com)

**comicsXP**  
community

twitter

myspace  
.com

facebook

comic space

plaxo



WildBlueZero

